SHORTER LYRICS *of the* TWENTIETH CENTURY, 1900–1922

SELECTED, WITH A FOREWORD, BY
W. H. DAVIES

The Poetry Bookshop

74005

1624

821·1 No author
~~AAT~~ DAV

CROSBY HALL LIBRARY

BFWG

Sybil Campbell Collection
Formerly Crosby Hall Library

IVY DAVISON BEQUEST

Ryl. M. Sanborn
November 1922

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/shorterlyricsoft0000whda_x1v0

SHORTER LYRICS
OF THE
TWENTIETH CENTURY

SHORTER LYRICS
OF THE
TWENTIETH CENTURY
1900—1922

SELECTED,
WITH A *FOREWORD*, BY
W. H. DAVIES

THE POETRY BOOKSHOP
35 DEVONSHIRE STREET, LONDON, W.C. 1

PUBLISHED OCTOBER, 1922

THE WESTMINSTER PRESS
411A HARROW ROAD
LONDON, W.9

A Foreword

THIS is an anthology of poems, and not an anthology of poets. It is not made out of friendship to certain poets, but from the pure love of poetry. That speaks for its honesty.

In reading a great number of anthologies, I have come to the conclusion that most of the compilers work in this way : first, they think of a poet—let us say W. B. Yeats or John Masefield. Then, thinking that "Innisfree" or "Cargoes" must be their best lyrics, because they are their most popular, make those poems their first choice. But my first cry, on thinking of W. B. Yeats, was "A Faery Song," which I think is his most perfect poem, although it is not held in much esteem by anthologists.

I am not a fastidious bookworm, for there is probably not another author living who knows less about books. But when I have once read a beautiful poem, it clings to my memory. I have always criticised my own work severely, especially of late years. Several friends have advised me to use a poem of my own, "A Great Time," because it has been called perfect, and been a favourite with anthologists. But my opinion is that the poem has a facile run in the middle, where four lines are made to do the work of three ; and that's where its imperfection lies. When I am in doubt about a poem, I consult my friends. But, unfortunately, an artist's friends are his enemies, as far as his work is concerned, and his real enemies are his best friends.

Patriotic poetry has been purposely avoided, as it is seldom enjoyed by lovers of real poetry, and I am determined to run no risk of being offered a knighthood. Anthologies of the patriotic kind, made for schools, are mostly bad. Their

idea is to foster a love of patriotism, and not of poetry. As if both these things could not be done at one and the same time by such lines as these :

" Oh, to be in England
Now that April's there,"—

instead of the rhetorical jingle we so often read. However, these anthologies are in the hands of Professors, and the life of a Professor is usually a series of mistakes. What will our children think when they grow up and find that the poets whose lines they were forced to commit to memory were not the best poets of their day !

Although I have used very little war poetry, I have not made this anthology a bowl of goldfish that have no dark companions, as will be seen by a number of strong poems on other subjects.

My object in making this selection is to produce a book on every page of which is a thing of beauty or interest. In reading modern anthologies, it has seldom been my delight to find something new to surprise me. Mrs. Meynell's "Flower of the Mind" was worth doing if only to make known that wildly beautiful lyric called "Tom o' Bedlam," which makes me think that, had Shakespeare known it, it would not have remained anonymous. The same pleasure came to me on reading A. M.'s "Anthology of Modern Verse," in which I read for the first time T. E. Brown's " Dora."

There are quite a number of poets at the present time who are writing descriptive verse of a high order, which is to be seen in most of our anthologies. But their work begins and ends in description, and neither casts any light on their own minds nor on humanity in general. These poets seem to lead easy and placid lives, without having any burning sympa-

thies to make themselves great as men. A man can be a great man without being a great poet, but I doubt whether there was ever a great poet who was not a great man. Most of these poets are teetotallers, I believe, and lack the sympathy and generosity of men that drink. Christ, to perform a miracle worthy of our greatest wonder, did not turn water into tea, coffee or cocoa, but into wine!

There can be no serious argument about free verse. The only thing that can be said is that a number of people are using it who are not poets at all. But the same thing can be said of a far greater number who use the traditional form of verse. Whitman proves himself, in quotation, a great poet, no matter what form he adopted. Lovers of the traditional form must not be blind to the beauty of "Out of the cradle endlessly rocking," or "Loved in the flood of thy bliss O Death." Nor must the lovers of free verse forget Whitman's greatness when he used rhyme in the old traditional form, like this:

But O heart! heart! heart!
O the bleeding drops of red,
Where on the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

As I am acting as a critic in doing this anthology, my own contribution is one poem. I would like to draw all the attention possible to the good poems I have discovered by other people. I am not cunning enough to leave my work out altogether, to have a chorus of voices complain of the omission.

I would like to say that although this book may be a guide to the best short poems, it is not meant to be a guide to the best poets. I have missed quite a number of good things owing

to length. For that reason, this book does not do justice to the work of Lascelles Abercrombie, Gordon Bottomley, and some others.

It is agreed that an anthology, to be good, must hold surprises. Some of the poems in this book have been discovered for the first time. Perhaps the reader will be interested in another surprise—the worst poets have charged the highest fees for the use of their work.

W. H. DAVIES.

Index

		PAGE
A Christmas Carol	*A. S. Cripps*	162
A Duet	*T. S. Moore*	45
A Faery Song	*W. B. Yeats*	175
A Nocturne	*W. S. Blunt*	117
A Piper	*S. O'Sullivan*	159
A Prayer	*A. Douglas*	84
A Song to Arolilia, Dweller by the Fountain	*H. Trench*	62
A Starving Bird	*W. B. Nichols*	171
A Virginal	*E. Pound*	76
Acon. I	*H. D.*	68
Acon. II	*H. D.*	69
After Two Years	*R. Aldington*	131
Alba	*F. S. Flint*	166
Amends to Nature	*A. Symons*	29
An Afterthought on Apples	*H. Parry Eden*	88
An Autobiography	*E. Rhys*	140
An Immorality	*E. Pound*	34
Anthem for Doomed Youth	*W. Owen*	79
Arabia	*W. de la Mare*	52
At Night	*A. Meynell*	120
Autumn Morning at Cambridge	*F. Cornford*	39
Awake, My Heart, to be Loved	*R. Bridges*	129
Babylon	*A. E.*	118
Beside the Bed	*C. Mew*	102
Betwixt New Loves	*G. Crow*	70
Biblysium	*H. J. Massingham*	53
Bog Love	*S. Leslie*	56
But if Our Love	*M. Field*	161
By a Bier-side	*J. Masefield*	182
C. L. M.	*J. Masefield*	170
Cargoes	*J. Masefield*	143

		PAGE
Cities and Thrones and Powers	*R. Kipling*	57
Come let us make Love Deathless	*H. Trench*	22
Consider	*F. M. Hueffer*	119
Cornish Wind	*A. Symons*	105
Courtesy	*H. Belloc*	64
Death of a Child	*M. M. Webster*	44
Doors of the Temple	*A. Huxley*	38
Dream-Merchandise	*V. Locke Ellis*	122
Early Morning Meadow Song	*C. Dalmon*	149
Earth and Her Birds	*A. Noyes*	93
Epitaphium Citharistriæ	*V. Plarr*	26
Eve	*N. Gale*	151
Everyone Sang	*S. Sassoon*	107
Failure	*R. Brooke*	46
False Anchorage	*R. Church*	67
Farewell	*W. de la Mare*	186
For a Guest Room	*J. Drinkwater*	124
For the Eightieth Birthday of George Meredith	*A. Noyes*	155
Gloire de Dijon	*D. H. Lawrence*	141
Glory, Glory to the Sun	*J. Alford*	23
Green Beads	*L. Golding*	86
Green Candles	*H. Wolfe*	106
Grey	*M. Armstrong*	71
Hate	*J. Stephens*	50
Her Beauty	*M. Plowman*	49
Home	*Wilfrid Gibson*	78
I Love all Beauteous Things	*R. Bridges*	17
In a Field	*F. Shove*	167
Intimacy	*E. Rickword*	158

		PAGE
Invocation	*J. Masefield*	19
Ishmael	*H. E. Palmer*	30
It was the Lovely Moon	*J. Freeman*	73
Journey's End	*H. Wolfe*	47
Lean out of the Window	*J. Joyce*	168
Lilac	*F. S. Flint*	152
Lochaber no more !	*N. Munro*	113
Lost Love	*R. Graves*	100
Love's Faintness Defied	*T. S. Moore*	183
Margaret's Song	*L. Abercrombie*	89
Merveilleuses de nos Jours	*D. Goldring*	164
New Horizons	*S. R. Lysaght*	91
Night Thoughts	*G. Elton*	137
No Child	*P. Colum*	178
O Dreamy, Gloomy, Friendly Trees	*H. Trench*	156
O Sweetheart, Hear You	*J. Joyce*	98
Outside the Carlton	*S. Leslie*	108
Ploughman at the Plough	*L. Golding*	21
Renovation	*T. S. Moore*	25
Rest—" On me to rest, my bird, my bird "	*A. E.*	180
Rest—" To spend the long warm days "	*M. L. Woods*	130
Rooks	*C. H. Sorley*	138
Sea Love	*C. Mew*	154
Service of all the Dead	*D. H. Lawrence*	94
Sheep	*C. K. Burrow*	33
Sheep and Lambs	*K. Tynan*	112

		PAGE
Shepherds	*E. Farjeon*	42
Solitude	*H. Monro*	179
Song—" O, Fly not Pleasure "	*W. S. Blunt*	165
Song—" Spring lights her candles "	*F. Shove*	59
Song from " The Tragic Mary "	*M. Field*	173
Sonnet	*R. Brooke*	55
Spring	*A. Douglas*	174
Spring Goeth all in White	*R. Bridges*	103
Stillness	*J. E. Flecker*	35
Tall Nettles	*E. Thomas*	125
Tam i' the Kirk	*V. Jacob*	80
The Bells of Heaven	*R. Hodgson*	185
The Breaking of Nations	*T. Hardy*	32
The Bridge	*H. B. Binns*	153
The Cherry-Blossom Wand	*A. Wickham*	24
The Cherry Trees	*E. Thomas*	85
The Cock and the Hen	*R. L. Gales*	96
The Consummation	*R. Nichols*	82
The Darkling Thrush	*T. Hardy*	99
The Dromedary	*A. Y. Campbell*	132
The Dug-Out	*S. Sassoon*	147
The Early Morning	*H. Belloc*	95
The Fairy Lough	*M. O'Neill*	28
The Fairy Wood	*R. Flower*	110
The Fan	*E. Sitwell*	40
The Game	*C. Bax*	144
The Gipsy Girl	*R. Hodgson*	116
The Green River	*A. Douglas*	115
The Hammers	*R. Hodgson*	27
The Hawk	*A. C. Benson*	36
The Hill	*R. Brooke*	177
The Kingfisher	*W. H. Davies*	128
The Lady Poverty	*E. Underhill*	51
The Lake Isle of Innisfree	*W. B. Yeats*	37
The Law the Lawyers know about	*H. D. C. Pepler*	18

		PAGE
The Little Dancers	*L. Binyon*	58
The Little Waves of Breffny	*E. Gore Booth*	60
The Mad Man	*L. A. G. Strong*	61
The Mad Woman of Punnet's Town	*L. A. G. Strong*	139
The March	*J. C. Squire*	65
The Moods	*W. B. Yeats*	20
The New House	*E. Thomas*	150
The Old Ships	*J. E. Flecker*	83
The Old Woman	*J. Campbell*	114
The One	*G. Anderson*	135
The Parrot	*S. Sitwell*	163
The Plougher	*P. Colum*	127
The Ploughman	*G. Bottomley*	63
The Praise of Dust	*G. K. Chesterton*	97
The Princess	*W. J. Turner*	43
The Return	*E. Pound*	126
The Rowers' Chant	*T. S. Moore*	121
The Seed Shop	*M. Stuart*	90
The Shepherdess	*A. Meynell*	92
The Sixth Day	*H. Shipp*	101
The Snail	*W. K. Seymour*	123
The Snare	*J. Stephens*	74
The Song of Shadows	*W. de la Mare*	66
The Song of Tel the Nubian	*I. Rosenberg*	160
The Song of the Ungirt Runners	*C. H. Sorley*	48
The Spirit of Air	*W. de la Mare*	157
The Star	*J. Campbell*	134
The Storm	*E. Shanks*	81
The Swallow	*R. Hodgson*	87
The Thief	*R. Macaulay*	148
The Tired Man	*A. Wickham*	111
The True Paradise	*J. E. Flecker*	187
The Two Watchers	*T. Moult*	145
The Unwritten Song	*F. M. Hueffer*	136
The Visit	*J. D. Beezley*	109

		PAGE
The Wife of Llew	*F. Ledwidge*	31
The Wind Chants Well To-Day	*E. Carpenter*	72
Tim, an Irish Terrier	*W. M. Letts*	41
To a Blue Tit	*V. H. Friedlander*	142
To a Fair Infant	*M. M. Johnson*	104
To One Poem in a Silent Time	*A. Meynell*	172
To Poets	*C. H. Sorley*	181
To the Moon	*T. Hardy*	176
Too Late	*M. Field*	133
When I Set Out for Lyonnesse	*T. Hardy*	77
When June is Come	*R. Bridges*	146
When You are Old	*W. B. Yeats*	184
Wilderness	*E. Blunden*	169
Words	*E. Rhys*	75
Youth	*H. Newbolt*	54

I Love All Beauteous Things

I LOVE all beauteous things,
I seek and adore them;
God hath no better praise,
And man in his hasty days
Is honoured for them.

I too will something make
And joy in the making!
Altho' to-morrow it seem
Like the empty words of a dream
Remembered, on waking.

The Law the Lawyers Know About

The law the lawyers know about
Is property and land;
But why the leaves are on the trees,
And why the winds disturb the seas,
Why honey is the food of bees,
Why horses have such tender knees,
Why winters come and rivers freeze,
Why Faith is more than what one sees,
And Hope survives the worst disease,
And Charity is more than these,
They do not understand.

Invocation

O WANDERER into many brains,
O spark the emperor's purple hides,
You sow the dusk with fiery grains
When the gold horseman rides.
O beauty on the darkness hurled,
Be it through me you shame the world

The Moods

Time drops in decay,
Like a candle burnt out,
And the mountains and woods
Have their day, have their day;
What one in the rout
Of the fire-born moods
Has fallen away?

Ploughman at the Plough

He behind the straight plough stands
Stalwart, firm shafts in firm hands.

Naught he cares for wars and naught
For the fierce disease of thought.

Only for the winds, the sheer
Naked impulse of the year,

Only for the soil which stares
Clean into God's face he cares.

In the stark might of his deed
There is more than art or creed;

In his wrist more strength is hid
Than in the monstrous Pyramid;

Stauncher than stern Everest
Be the muscles of his breast;

Not the Atlantic sweeps a flood
Potent as the ploughman's blood.

He, his horse, his ploughshare, these
Are the only verities.

Dawn to dusk with God he stands,
The Earth poised on his broad hands.

Come let us make Love Deathless

Come, let us make love deathless, thou and I,
Seeing that our footing on the Earth is brief—
Seeing that her multitudes sweep out to die
Mocking at all that passes our belief.
For standard of our love not theirs we take :
If we go hence to-day,
Fill the high cup that is so soon to break
With richer wine than they !

Ay, since beyond these walls no heavens there be,
Joy to revive or wasted youth repair,
I'll not bedim the lovely flame in thee,
Nor sully the sad splendour that we wear.
Great be the love, if with the lover dies
Our greatness past recall,
And nobler for the fading of those eyes
The world seen once for all.

Glory, glory to the sun
who spends his being
caring not what he shines upon
nor for whose seeing.

In the furrow swells the wheat
and the chestnut leaf respires,
quickened to life by the heat
of his innocent fires.

Small thanks the farmer allows,
turning his hay,
but watches with reckoning brows
the fall of the day.

Clouds flame in the upper air;
the fields slip to the night;
but the rugged horsemen of Thibet stir
to a finger of light.

They wrap their skins about
and spear in hand,
round up their flocks and shout
and scour the land.

The Cherry-Blossom Wand

I WILL pluck from my tree a cherry-blossom wand,
And carry it in my merciless hand,
So I will drive you, so bewitch your eyes,
With a beautiful thing that can never grow wise.

Light are the petals that fall from the bough,
And lighter the love that I offer you now;
In a spring day shall the tale be told
Of the beautiful things that will never grow old.

The blossoms shall fall in the night wind,
And I will leave you so, to be kind:
Eternal in beauty are short-lived flowers,
Eternal in beauty, these exquisite hours.

I will pluck from my tree a cherry-blossom wand,
And carry it in my merciless hand,
So I will drive you, so bewitch your eyes,
With a beautiful thing that shall never grow wise.

Renovation

Would that I were naked Adam,
And you like Eve ran bare,
Though all our friends and other folk
Unborn, un-thought-of, were!

Should we miss house or street or town,
Gossip, tea or cake,
Might we but climb a breeze-rocked pine,
Doze there or lie awake?

Ah, nothing grieves that is itself:
Say, are these millions men
Who, boxed in slate-roofed rows, there sicken
For sea, forest or glen?

Epitaphium Citharistriae

Stand not uttering sedately
  Trite oblivious praise above her!
Rather say you saw her lately
  Lightly kissing her last lover.

Whisper not, "There is a reason
  Why we bring her no white blossom":
Since the snowy bloom's in season
  Strow it on her sleeping bosom:

Oh, for it would be a pity
  To o'erpraise her or to flout her:
She was wild, and sweet, and witty—
  Let's not say dull things about her.

The Hammers

Noise of hammers once I heard,
Many hammers, busy hammers,
Beating, shaping, night and day,
Shaping, beating dust and clay
To a palace ; saw it reared ;
Saw the hammers laid away.

And I listened, and I heard
Hammers beating, night and day,
In the palace newly reared,
Beating it to dust and clay :
Other hammers, muffled hammers,
Silent hammers of decay.

The Fairy Lough

Loughareema ! Loughareema
  Lies so high among the heather ;
A little lough, a dark lough,
  The wather's black and deep.
Ould herons go a-fishin' there,
  An' sea-gulls all together
Float roun' the one green island
  On the fairy lough asleep.

Loughareema, Loughareema ;
  When the sun goes down at seven,
When the hills are dark an' *airy*,
  'Tis a curlew whistles sweet !
Then somethin' rustles all the reeds
  That stand so thick an' even ;
A little wave runs up the shore
  An' flees, as if on feet.

Loughareema ! Loughareema !
  Stars come out, an' stars are hidin' :
The wather whispers on the stones,
  The flitterin' moths are free.
One'st before the mornin' light
  The Horsemen will come ridin'
Roun' an' roun' the fairy lough,
  An' no one there to see.

Amends to Nature

I HAVE loved colours, and not flowers;
Their motion, not the swallow's wings;
And wasted more than half my hours
Without the comradeship of things.

How is it, now, that I can see,
With love and wonder and delight,
The children of the hedge and tree,
The little lords of day and night?

How is it that I see the roads,
No longer with usurping eyes,
A twilight meeting-place for toads,
A mid-day mart for butterflies?

I feel, in every midge that hums,
Life, fugitive and infinite,
And suddenly the world becomes
A part of me and I of it.

Ishmael

And Ishmael crouched beside a crackling briar
Blinded with sand, and maddened by his thirst,
A derelict, though he knew not why accursed.
And lo! One saw, and strung the dissonant lyre,
Made firm his bow unto the arrow's spire,
And gave him dates and wine. Then at the first
Flushings of dawn Ishmael arose, and burst
To triumphing freedom, ran, and eased desire.

His domain was the desert. None tamed him.
None bought or sold his spirit, though his hand
Dripped red against the dawn and sunset stain.

Thrones melted, kingdoms passed to the world's rim.
But Ishmael scourged the lion in Paran land,
And kept his faith with God. And he will reign.

The Wife of Llew

And Gwydion said to Math, when it was Spring:
" Come now and let us make a wife for Llew."

And so they broke broad boughs yet moist with dew,
And in a shadow made a magic ring:
They took the violet and the meadow-sweet
To form her pretty face, and for her feet
They built a mound of daisies on a wing,
And for her voice they made a linnet sing
In the wide poppy blowing for her mouth.
And over all they chanted twenty hours.
And Llew came singing from the azure south
And bore away his wife of birds and flowers.

The Breaking of Nations

Only a man harrowing clods
  In a slow silent walk
With an old horse that stumbles and nods
  Half asleep as they stalk.

Only thin smoke without flame
  From the heaps of couch-grass :
Yet this will go onward the same
  Though Dynasties pass.

Yonder a maid and her wight
  Come whispering by :
War's annals will cloud into night
  Ere their story die.

Sheep

Huddled, rain-drenched, forlorn they stood,
Their fleeces blown one way;
The wet wind cried in solitude
About the failing day.

Leaves whirled below, aloft; the sky
Sagged like a sodden shroud;
No stir of life, no pleading cry,
Came from the draggled crowd.

Sudden the western portals wide
Opened on that gaunt fold;
Then lo, a flock beatified
With fleeces dripping gold!

An Immorality

Sing we for love and idleness,
Naught else is worth the having.

Though I have been in many a land,
There is naught else in living.

And I would rather have my sweet,
Though rose-leaves die of grieving,

Than do high deeds in Hungary
To pass all men's believing.

Stillness

When the words rustle no more,
And the last work's done,
When the bolt lies deep in the door,
And Fire, our Sun,
Falls on the dark-laned meadows of the floor;

When from the clock's last chime to the next chime
Silence beats his drum,
And Space with gaunt grey eyes and her brother Time
Wheeling and whispering come,
She with the mould of form and he with the loom of rhyme,

Then twittering out in the night my thought-birds flee,
I am emptied of all my dreams:
I only hear Earth turning, only see
Ether's long bankless streams,
And only know I should drown if you
Laid not your hand on me.

The Hawk

The hawk slipt out of the pine, and rose in the sunlit air :
Steady and still he poised ; his shadow slept on the grass :
And the bird's song sickened and sank : she cowered with furtive stare,
Dumb, till the quivering dimness should flicker and shift and pass.

Suddenly down he dropped : she heard the hiss of his wing,
Fled with a scream of terror : oh, would she had dared to rest !
For the hawk at eve was full, and there was no bird to sing,
And over the heather drifted the down from a bleeding breast.

The Lake Isle of Innisfree

I WILL arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made :
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honey bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings ;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore ;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

Doors of the Temple

Many are the doors of the spirit that lead
  Into the inmost shrine :
And I count the gates of the temple divine,
  Since the god of the place is God indeed.
  And these are the gates that God decreed
Should lead to His house :—kisses and wine,
Cool depths of thought, youth without rest,
  And calm old age, prayer and desire,
The Lover's and mother's breast,
  The fire of sense and the poet's fire.

But he that worships the gates alone,
  Forgetting the shrine beyond, shall see
  The great valves open suddenly,
Revealing, not God's radiant throne,
  But the fires of wrath and agony.

Autumn Morning at Cambridge

I RAN out in the morning when the air was clean and new,
And all the grass was glittering, and grey with autumn
dew,
I ran out to the apple-tree and pulled an apple down,
And all the bells were ringing in the old grey town.

Down in the town, off the bridges and the grass,
They are sweeping up the leaves to let the people pass,
Sweeping up the old leaves, golden-reds and browns,
While the men go to lecture with the wind in their gowns.

The Fan

Lovely Semiramis
Closes her slanting eyes :
Dead is she long ago.
From her fan, sliding slow,
Parrot-bright fire's feathers,
Gilded as June weathers,
Plumes bright and shrill as grass
Twinkle down ; as they pass
Through the green glooms in Hell
Fruits with a tuneful smell,
Grapes like an emerald rain,
Where the full moon has lain,
Greengages bright as grass,
Melons as cold as glass,
Piled on each gilded booth,
Feel their cheeks growing smooth.
Apes in plumed head-dresses
Whence the bright heat hisses,—
Nubian faces, sly
Pursing mouth, slanting eye,
Feel the Arabian
Winds floating from the fan.

Tim, an Irish Terrier

It's wonderful dogs they're breeding now :
Small as a flea or large as a cow,
But my old lad Tim he'll never be bet
By any dog that ever he met.
" Come on," says he, " for I'm not kilt yet."

No matter the size of the dog he'll meet,
Tim trails his coat the length o' the street.
D'ye mind his scars an' his ragged ear,
The like of a Dublin Fusilier ?
He's a massacree dog that knows no fear.

But he'd stick to me till his latest breath ;
An' he'd go with me to the gates of death.
He'd wait for a thousand years, maybe,
Scratching the door an' whining for me
If myself were inside in Purgatory.

So I laugh when I hear them make it plain
That dogs and men never meet again.
For all their talk who'd listen to thim
With the soul in the shining eyes of him ?
Would God be wasting a dog like Tim ?

Shepherds

You shepherd boys who spend long hours
Of doing nothing by your sheep
That crop the tiny downland flowers
And the green turf in order keep,

How do you while the time away ?
What lonely hills of thought have you
Where you in silence browse and play
Among small flowers and pools of dew ?

Or have you all the morning naught
To think about but dinner-time,
When youthful shepherds, sick of thought,
Run down the hills old shepherds climb ?

The Princess

The stone-grey roses by the desert's rim
Are soft-edged shadows on the moonlit sand,
Grey are the broken walls of Conchubar
That haunt of nightingales, whose voices are
Fountains that bubble in the dream-soft Moon.

Shall the Gazelles with moonbeam pale bright feet
Entering the vanished gardens sniff the air—
Some scent may linger of that ancient time,
Musician's song, or poet's passionate rhyme,
The Princess dead, still wandering love-sick there.

A Princess pale and cold as mountain snow,
In cool, dark chambers sheltered from the sun,
With long, dark lashes and small delicate hands,
All Persia sighed to kiss her small, red mouth
Until they buried her in shifting sand.

And the Gazelles shall flit by in the Moon
And never shake the frail Tree's lightest leaves,
And moonlight roses perfume the pale Dawn
Until the scarlet life from her lips drawn
Gathers its shattered beauty in the sky.

Death of a Child

All the love in the world
Was hid in the touch of his hand,
And the rose on his cheek
And the sleek
White limbs, and the questioning, bland,
Wide eyes, with their petulant wonder.
Now all the roses lie under
And all the snows, and unbidden,
Quiet, quilt-like, the clover
Creeps over,
Where, in the cold earth, is hidden
Dark-curtained, close-curled,
All the love in the world.

A Duet

" Flowers nodding gaily, scent in air,
Flowers posied, flowers for the hair,
Sleepy flowers, flowers bold to stare—"
" Oh, pick me some ! "

" Shells with lip, or tooth, or bleeding gum,
Tell-tale shells, and shells that whisper ' Come,'
Shells that stammer, blush, and yet are dumb—"
" Oh, let me hear ! "

" Eyes so black they draw you trembling near,
Brown eyes, caverns flooded with a tear,
Cloudless eyes, blue eyes so windy clear— "
" Oh, look at me ! "

" Kisses sadly blown across the sea,
Darkling kisses, kisses fair and free,
Bob-a-cherry kisses 'neath a tree—"
" Oh, give me one ! "

Thus sang a king and queen in Babylon.

Failure

Because God put His adamantine fate
  Between my sullen heart and its desire,
I swore that I would burst the Iron Gate,
  Rise up, and curse Him on His throne of fire.
Earth shuddered at my crown of blasphemy,
  But Love was as a flame about my feet;
Proud up the Golden Stair I strode; and beat
  Thrice on the Gate, and entered with a cry—

All the great courts were quiet in the sun,
  And full of vacant echoes: moss had grown
Over the glassy pavement, and begun
  To creep within the dusty council-halls.
An idle wind blew round an empty throne
  And stirred the heavy curtains on the walls.

Journey's End

What will they give me, when journey's done ?
Your own room to be quiet in, Son !

Who shares it with me ? There is none
shares that cool dormitory, Son !

Who turns the sheets ? There is but one
and no one needs to turn it, Son.

Who lights the candle ? Everyone
sleeps without candle all night, Son.

Who calls me after sleeping ? Son,
You are not called when journey's done.

The Song of the Ungirt Runners

We swing ungirded hips,
And lightened are our eyes.
The rain is on our lips,
We do not run for prize.
We know not whom we trust
Nor whitherward we fare,
But we run because we must
Through the great wide air.

The waters of the seas
Are troubled as by storm.
The tempest strips the trees
And does not leave them warm.
Does the tearing tempest pause?
Do the tree-tops ask it why?
So we run without a cause
'Neath the big bare sky.

The rain is on our lips,
We do not run for prize.
But the storm the water whips
And the wave howls to the skies.
The winds arise and strike it
And scatter it like sand,
And we run because we like it
Through the broad, bright land.

Her Beauty

I HEARD them say, " Her hands are hard as stone,"
And I remembered how she laid for me
The road to heaven. They said, " Her hair is grey."
Then I remembered how she once had thrown
Long plaited strands, like cables, into the sea
I battled in—the salt sea of dismay.
They said, " Her beauty's past." And then I wept,
That these, who should have been in love adept,
Against my fount of beauty should blaspheme,
And hearing a new music, miss the theme.

Hate

My enemy came nigh,
And I
Stared fiercely in his face.
My lips went writhing back in a grimace,
And stern I watched him with a narrow eye.
Then, as I turned away, my enemy,
That bitter heart and savage, said to me:
"Some day, when this is past,
When all the arrows that we have are cast,
We may ask one another why we hate,
And fail to find a story to relate.
It may seem then to us a mystery
That we should hate each other."
Thus said he,
And did not turn away,
Waiting to hear what I might have to say,
But I fled quickly, fearing if I stayed
I might have kissed him as I would a maid.

The Lady Poverty

I MET her on the Umbrian hills,
Her hair unbound, her feet unshod :
As one whom secret glory fills
She walked, alone with God.

I met her in the city street :
Oh, changed was all her aspect then !
With heavy eyes and weary feet
She walked alone, with men.

Arabia

Far are the shades of Arabia,
  Where the Princes ride at noon,
'Mid the verdurous vales and thickets,
  Under the ghost of the moon;
And so dark is that vaulted purple
  Flowers in the forest rise
And toss into blossom 'gainst the phantom stars
  Pale in the noonday skies.

Sweet is the music of Arabia
  In my heart, when out of dreams
I still in the thin clear mirk of dawn
  Descry her gliding streams;
Hear her strange lutes on the green banks
  Ring loud with the grief and delight
Of the dim-silked, dark-haired Musicians
  In the brooding silence of night.

They haunt me—her lutes and her forests;
  No beauty on earth I see,
But shadowed with that dream recalls
  Her loveliness to me;
Still eyes look coldly upon me,
  Cold voices whisper and say—
"He is crazed with the spell of far Arabia,
  They have stolen his wits away."

Biblysium

" We sleep beneath the eternal morn,
Or wake, when'er the title-page,
The herald of our hopes and joys
Blows his enchanting horn.

" Like mottled calf, among the trees
With leaves well-margined, splash the rays
O' the sun, the first edition
Of this our Paradise.

" No envious night can gloom upon
The initials swaying in the breeze,
The quarto browsing on the turf,
The budding colophon.

" The woodcuts flute their simple lay
In shady coverts fearless, where
Prowl tusky, huge and pachyderm
The Incunabula.

" Aldus with anchor hooks lobbestere
And salts his catch with Pickering,
And ale into the beaker pours
The gentle Elzevir.

" Old Stephan culls the plumpest fruit,
Plantin will brew us savory herbs,
And Baskerville with opiate flowers
Entwine his psalming lute.

" No storms we fear, no cares we know,
Reclining on the folioge,
List'ning the lay of the Bookish Fray
'Neath the duodecimo."

Youth

His song of dawn outsoars the joyful bird,
Swift on the weary road his footfall comes;
The dusty air that by his stride is stirred
  Beats with a buoyant march of fairy drums.
"Awake, O Earth! thine ancient slumber break;
To the new day, O slumbrous Earth, awake!"

Yet long ago that merry march began,
His feet are older than the path they tread;
His music is the morning-song of man,
  His stride the stride of all the valiant dead;
His youngest hopes are memories, and his eyes
Deep with the old, old dream that never dies.

Sonnet

I SAID I splendidly loved you ; it's not true.
Such long swift tides stir not a land-locked sea.
On gods or fools the high risk falls—on you—
The clean clear bitter-sweet that's not for me.
Love soars from earth to ecstasies unwist.
Love is flung Lucifer-like from Heaven to Hell.
But—there are wanderers in the middle mist,
Who cry for shadows, clutch, and cannot tell
Whether they love at all, or, loving, whom :
An old song's lady, a fool in fancy dress,
Or phantoms, or their own face on the gloom ;
For love of Love, or from heart's loneliness.
Pleasure's not theirs, nor pain. They doubt, and sigh,
And do not love at all. Of these am I.

Bog Love

Wee Shemus was a misdropt man
Without a shoulder to his back;
He had the way to lift a rann
And throttled rabbits in a sack.

And red-haired Mary whom he wed,
Brought him but thirty shillings told;
She had but one eye in her head,
But Shemus counted it for gold.

The two went singing in the hay
Or kissing underneath the sloes,
And where they chanced to pass the day
There was no need to scare the crows.

But now with Mary waked and laid
As decent as she lived and died,
Poor Shemus went to buy a spade
To dig himself a place beside.

Cities and Thrones and Powers

Cities and Thrones and Powers,
Stand in Time's eye,
Almost as long as flowers,
Which daily die:
But, as new buds put forth,
To glad new men,
Out of the spent and unconsidered Earth,
The Cities rise again.

This season's Daffodil,
She never hears
What change, what chance, what chill,
Cut down last year's:
But with bold countenance,
And knowledge small,
Esteems her seven days' continuance
To be perpetual.

So time that is o'er-kind,
To all that be,
Ordains us e'en as blind,
As bold as she:
That in our very death,
And burial sure,
Shadow to shadow, well-persuaded, saith,
"See how our works endure!"

The Little Dancers

Lonely, save for a few faint stars, the sky
Dreams ; and lonely, below, the little street
Into its gloom retires, secluded and shy.
Scarcely the dumb roar enters this soft retreat ;
And all is dark, save where come flooding rays
From a tavern window : there, to the brisk measure
Of an organ that down in an alley merrily plays,
Two children, all alone and no one by,
Holding their tattered frocks, through an airy maze
Of motion, lightly threaded with nimble feet,
Dance sedately : face to face they gaze,
Their eyes shining, grave with a perfect pleasure.

Song

Spring lights her candles everywhere,
But death still hangs upon the air ;
The celandine through dusk is lit,
The redbreasts from the holly flit,
At night the violets spring to birth
Out of the mute, encrusted earth.

The wind has cast his winding sheet
(Which is the sky) and he goes fleet
Over the country in the rain,
Singing how all the world is vain
And how, of all things vainest, he
Journeys above both land and sea.

The Little Waves of Breffny

The grand road from the mountain goes shining to the sea,
And there is traffic in it, and many a horse and cart;
But the little roads of Cloonagh are dearer far to me
And the little roads of Cloonagh go rambling through my heart.

A great storm from the ocean goes shouting o'er the hill,
And there is glory in it and terror on the wind;
But the haunted airs of twilight are very strange and still
And the little winds of twilight are dearer to my mind.

The great waves of the Atlantic sweep storming on their way,
Shining green and silver with the hidden herring shoal;
But the Little Waves of Breffny have drenched my heart in spray,
And the Little Waves of Breffny go stumbling through my soul.

The Mad Man

I THINK I'll do a fearful deed
Of wickedness and cruelty,
And then, if Father Walsh speaks truth,
Jesus will weep a tear for me:

And I will catch it in my hat
Just here outside my cabin door,
And put it on my little field
Where nothing ever grew before.

And it will sprout so fine and brave
That lovely birds with yellow bills
Will come to pluck my crowded corn
From all the Seven Holy Hills.

Herbert Trench

A Song to Arolilia, Dweller by the Fountain

When you were born the Earth obeyed,
(*Call her, Echo!*)
Fragrancies from the distance blew,
Beanfields and violets were made
And jasmine by the cypress grew—
Jasmine by the cloudy yew—
(*Call her, Echo!*
Call Arolilia by her name!)

When you were born, despairs must die,
(*Call her, Echo!*)
Sweet tongues were loosened from a spell—
Snow mountains glistened from on high
And torrents to the valleys fell—
A song into man's bosom fell—
(*Call her, Echo!*
Call Arolilia by her name!)

When you were born, hid lightning's shape
(*Call her, Echo!*)
Took up the poor man's altar coal,
His green vine throbbed into the grape
And in the dastard sprang a soul—
Even in the dastard sprang a soul—
(*Call her, Echo!*
Call Arolilia by her name!)

When you were born, all golden shot
(*Call her, Echo!*)
Fountains of daybreak from the sea,
And still, if near I find you not—
If steps I hear, but you come not—
Darkness lies on the world for me!
(*Call her, Echo!*
Call Arolilia by her name!)

The Ploughman

Under the long fell's stony eaves
The ploughman, going up and down,
Ridge after ridge man's tide-mark leaves,
And turns the hard grey soil to brown.

Striding, he measures out the earth
In lines of life, to rain and sun;
And every year that comes to birth
Sees him still striding on and on.

The seasons change, and then return;
Yet still, in blind, unsparing ways,
However I may shrink or yearn,
The ploughman measures out my days.

His acre brought forth roots last year;
This year it bears the gleamy grain;
Next Spring shall seedling grass appear:
Then roots and corn and grass again.

Five times the young corn's pallid green
I have seen spread and change and thrill;
Five times the reapers I have seen
Go creeping up the far-off hill:

And, as the unknowing ploughman climbs
Slowly and inveterately,
I wonder long how many times
The corn will spring again for me.

Courtesy

Of Courtesy, it is much less
Than Courage of Heart or Holiness,
Yet in my Walks it seems to me
That the Grace of God is in Courtesy.

On Monks I did in Storrington fall,
They took me straight into their Hall;
I saw Three Pictures on a wall,
And Courtesy was in them all.

The first the Annunciation;
The second the Visitation;
The third the Consolation,
Of God that was Our Lady's Son.

The first was of Saint Gabriel;
On Wings a-flame from Heaven he fell;
And as he went upon one knee
He shone with Heavenly Courtesy.

Our Lady out of Nazareth rode—
It was Her month of heavy load;
Yet was Her face both great and kind,
For Courtesy was in Her Mind.

The third it was our Little Lord,
Whom all the Kings in arms adored;
He was so small you could not see
His large intent of Courtesy.

Our Lord, that was Our Lady's Son,
Go bless you, people, one by one;
My Rhyme is written, my work is done.

The March

I HEARD a voice that cried, " Make way for those who
died ! "
And all the coloured crowd like ghosts at morning fled ;
And down the waiting road, rank after rank there strode,
In mute and measured march a hundred thousand dead.

A hundred thousand dead, with firm and noiseless tread,
All shadowy-grey yet solid, with faces grey and ghast,
And by the house they went, and all their brows were bent
Straight forward ; and they passed, and passed, and
passed, and passed.

But O there came a place, and O there came a face,
That clenched my heart to see it, and sudden turned my
way ;
And in the Face that turned I saw two eyes that burned,
Never-forgotten eyes, and they had things to say.

Like desolate stars they shone one moment, and were gone
And I sank down and put my arms across my head,
And felt them moving past, nor looked to see the last,
In steady silent march, our hundred thousand dead.

The Song of Shadows

Sweep thy faint strings, Musician,
With thy long lean hand;
Downward the starry tapers burn,
Sinks soft the waning sand;
The old hound whimpers couched in sleep,
The embers smoulder low;
Across the wall the shadows
Come, and go.

Sweep softly thy strings, Musician,
The minutes mount to hours;
Frost on the windless casement weaves
A labyrinth of flowers;
Ghosts linger in the darkening air,
Hearken at the open door;
Music hath called them, dreaming,
Home once more.

False Anchorage

UNDER this hayrick lies
All my heart's treasure.
The impermanent skies
Pass at their leisure,
And the flowers of the noon
Prepare to fade soon.
The bird-music dies.
Oh bitter heart's treasure
To anchor me so
To this woman, my lover,
While the skies fade above her
And the earth dies below.

Acon. (I)

Bear me to Dictaeus,
and to the steep slopes;
to the river Erymanthus.

I choose spray of dittany,
cyperum, frail of flower,
buds of myrrh,
all-healing herbs,
close pressed in calathes.

For she lies panting,
drawing sharp breath,
broken with harsh sobs,
she, Hyella,
whom no god pities.

Acon. (II)

Dryads
haunting the groves,
nereids
who dwell in wet caves,
for all the white leaves of olive-branch,
and early roses,
and ivy wreaths, woven gold berries,
which she once brought to your altars,
bear now ripe fruits from Arcadia,
and Assyrian wine
to shatter her fever.

The light of her face falls from its flower,
as a hyacinth,
hidden in a far valley,
perishes upon burnt grass.

Pales,
bring gifts,
bring your Phoenician stuffs,
and do you, fleet-footed nymphs,
bring offerings,
Illyrian iris,
and a branch of shrub,
and frail-headed poppies.

Betwixt new loves and newer loves
Have me not utterly out of mind,
While yet to common praise unfurled
The banner of your beauty moves,
And I am dust upon the wind
That blows my name about the world.

Remember how to-night I crept
Into your bed as lovers do,
And trafficked not with love, but laid
My body by your body and wept
Because of shame at making you
So light a thing as others made.

Grey

Grey of the twilight, come,
Spread those wide wings above our meadows : bring
Coolness and mist : make dumb
The jarring noise of day ; and gently ring
Our woods and ponds with dimness : take away
All busy stir, but let the grey owl sway
Noiselessly over the bough like a little ghost :
And let the cricket in the dark hedge sing
His withered note : and O Immortal Host,
Welcome this traveller to your drowsy hall
And, standing at the porch, speechless and tall,
Close the great doors, shut out the world, and shed
Your benediction on this drooping head.

The Wind Chants Well To-Day

The wind chants well over the world to-day ;
It runs in waves up the slopes of the corn-fields, and sounds deep and distant, like the sea, among the firs ;
The tall grasses in sheltered spots quiver on their wiry stems—for it is flowering time—
And shake faint clouds of pollen upon the air.

Strange purposes inhabit the woodland hollows and the high air to-day ;
The long-legged spider threading the blades of grass, touching, trying, retreating, encloses strange purposes, the wind encloses strange purposes.

But I know you well, O wind—you cannot escape me.
You are very subtle, you have innumerable disguises :
You are one thing to the grass with its beautiful hanging anthers and branched stigma,
And another thing to the birds, and another to the solemn swaying fir-trees.

You conceal yourself well, O wind, but I am level with you to-day—you cannot hide yourself from me.
I go arm in arm, I ride over the world with you.
I visit a thousand spots and leave my messages—
And am as invisible as you.

It was the Lovely Moon

It was the lovely moon—she lifted
Slowly her white brow among
Bronze cloud-waves that ebbed and drifted
Faintly, faintlier afar.
Calm she looked, yet pale with wonder,
Sweet in unwonted thoughtfulness,
Watching the earth that dwindled under
Faintly, faintlier afar.
It was the lovely moon that lovelike
Hovered over the wandering, tired
Earth, her bosom grey and dovelike,
Hovering beautiful as a dove . . .
The lovely moon :—her soft light falling
Lightly on roof and poplar and pine—
Tree to tree whispering and calling,
Wonderful in the silvery shine
Of the round, lovely, thoughtful moon.

The Snare

I HEAR a sudden cry of pain !
  There is a rabbit in a snare :
Now I hear the cry again,
  But I cannot tell from where.

But I cannot tell from where
  He is calling out for aid ;
Crying on the frightened air,
  Making everything afraid.

Making everything afraid,
  Wrinkling up his little face,
As he cries again for aid ;
  And I cannot find the place !

And I cannot find the place
  Where his paw is in the snare :
Little one ! Oh, little one !
  I am searching everywhere !

Words

Words, like fine flowers, have their colours too :
What do you say to crimson words and yellow ;
And what to opal, emerald, pale blue ?
And elvish gules ?—he is a glorious fellow.
Think of the purple hung in Elsinore,
Or call it black, and close your eyes to see ;
Go look for amber then on Lochlyn shore
And drag a sunbeam out of Arcady.
And who of Rosamund or Rosalind
Can part the rosy-petall'd syllables ?
For women's names keep murmuring like the wind
The hidden things that none for ever tells.
Last, to forego soft beauty, take the sword,
And see the blue steel redden at the word.

A Virginal

No, no ! Go from me. I have left her lately.
I will not spoil my sheath with lesser brightness,
For my surrounding air hath a new lightness ;
Slight are her arms, yet they have bound me straitly
And left me cloaked as with a gauze of aether ;
As with sweet leaves ; as with a subtle clearness.
Oh, I have picked up magic in that nearness
To sheathe me half in half the things that sheathe her.

No, no ! Go from me. I have still the flavour,
Soft as spring wind that's come from birchen bowers.
Green come the shoots, aye April in the branches,
As Winter's wound with her sleight hand she staunches
Hath of the trees a likeness of the savour :
As white their bark, so white this lady's hours.

When I Set Out for Lyonnesse

When I set out for Lyonnesse,
A hundred miles away,
The rime was on the spray,
And starlight lit my lonesomeness
When I set out for Lyonnesse
A hundred miles away.

What would bechance at Lyonnesse
While I should sojourn there
No prophet durst declare,
Nor did the wisest wizard guess
What would bechance at Lyonnesse
While I should sojourn there.

When I came back from Lyonnesse
With magic in my eyes,
All marked with mute surmise
My radiance rare and fathomless,
When I came back from Lyonnesse
With magic in my eyes!

Home

So long had I travelled the lonely road,
Though, now and again, a wayfaring friend
Walked shoulder to shoulder, and lightened the load,
I often would think to myself as I strode,
No comrade will journey with you to the end.

And it seemed to me, as the days went past,
And I gossiped with cronies, or brooded alone,
By wayside fires, that my fortune was cast
To sojourn by other men's hearths to the last,
And never to come to my own hearthstone.

The lonely road no longer I roam.
We met, and were one in the heart's desire.
Together we came, through the wintry gloam,
To the little old house by the cross-ways, home;
And crossed the threshold, and kindled the fire.

Anthem for Doomed Youth

WHAT passing-bells for these who die as cattle ?
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons.
No mockeries for them ; no prayers nor bells,
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,—
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells ;
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.

What candles may be held to speed them all ?
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmers of goodbyes.
The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall ;
Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

Tam i' the Kirk

O Jean, my Jean, when the bell ca's the congregation
Owre valley an' hill wi' the ding frae its iron mou',
When a' body's thochts is set on his ain salvation,
Mine's set on you.

There's a reid rose lies on the Buik o' the Word 'afore ye
That was growin' braw on its bush at the keek o' day,
But the lad that pu'd yon flower i' the mornin's glory,
He canna pray.

He canna pray ; but there's nane i' the kirk will heed him
Whaur he sits sae still his lane at the side o' the wa',
For nane but the reid rose kens what my lassie gie'd him—
It an' us twa !

He canna sing for the sang that his ain he'rt raises,
He canna see for the mist that's afore his een,
And a voice drouns the hale o' the psalms an' the paraphrases,
Cryin' " Jean, Jean, Jean ! "

The Storm

We wake to hear the storm come down,
Sudden on roof and pane;
The thunder's loud and the hasty wind
Hurries the beating rain.

The rain slackens, the wind blows gently,
The gust grows gentle and stills,
And the thunder, like a breaking stick,
Stumbles about the hills.

The drops still hang on leaf and thorn,
The downs stand up more green;
The sun comes out again in power
And the sky is washed and clean.

The Consummation

THERE is a pigeon in the apple-tree,
And when he moves the petals fall in showers,
And O how low, how slow, how rapturously,
He croons and croons again among the flowers!

Above the boughs a solemn cloud-bank climbs,
White, pure white, dazzling, a shield of light;
Speck on its space, a lark, whose quick song chimes
With each brief pulse of wings, vaults t'ward the height.

Below, a beetle on a stalk of grass
Slowly unharnesses his shuttered wings,
His tiny rainbow wings of shrivelled glass.
He leaps! He whirrs away. The grass-blade swings.

Faint breezes through the branches wind and call.
It is the hour. This perfect hour is His,
Who, stooping through the depth, quiet, joy of all,
Prints on my upturned face a silent kiss.

The Old Ships

I HAVE seen old ships sail like swans asleep
Beyond the village which men still call Tyre,
With leaden age o'ercargoed, dipping deep
For Famagusta and the hidden sun
That rings black Cyprus with a lake of fire ;
And all those ships were certainly so old
Who knows how oft with squat and noisy gun,
Questing brown slaves or Syrian oranges,
The pirate Genoese
Hell-raked them till they rolled
Blood, water, fruit and corpses up the hold.
But now through friendly seas they softly run,
Painted the mid-sea blue or shore-sea green,
Still patterned with the vine and grapes in gold.

But I have seen
Pointing her shapely shadows from the dawn
And image tumbled on a rose-swept bay
A drowsy ship of some yet older day ;
And, wonder's breath indrawn,
Thought I—who knows—who knows—but in that same
(Fished up beyond Aeaea, patched up new
—Stern painted brighter blue—)
That talkative, bald-headed seaman came
(Twelve patient comrades sweating at the oar)
From Troy's doom-crimson shore,
And with great lies about his wooden horse
Set the crew laughing and forgot his course.

It was so old a ship—who knows, who knows ?
—And yet so beautiful, I watched in vain
To see the mast burst open with a rose,
And the whole deck put on its leaves again.

A Prayer

Often the western wind has sung to me,
There have been voices in the streams and meres,
And pitiful trees have told me, God, of Thee :
And I heard not. Oh ! open Thou mine ears.

The reeds have whispered low as I passed by,
" Be strong, O friend, be strong, put off vain fears,
Vex not thy soul with doubts, God cannot lie : "
And I heard not. Oh ! open Thou mine ears.

There have been many stars to guide my feet,
Often the delicate moon, hearing my sighs,
Has rent the clouds and shown a silver street ;
And I saw not. Oh ! open Thou mine eyes.

Angels have beckoned me unceasingly,
And walked with me ; and from the sombre skies
Dear Christ Himself has stretched out hands to me ;
And I saw not. Oh ! open Thou mine eyes.

The Cherry Trees

The cherry trees bend over and are shedding,
On the old road where all that passed are dead,
Their petals, strewing the grass as for a wedding
This early May morn when there is none to wed.

Green Beads

Whence have you drawn, O shining beads,
The tints which blind my sight ?
" Down in the woods a wild cat bleeds,
He moans along the night.
He gave his green green eyes to deck
The whiteness of your lady's neck.

" He moans into the dark, he dies.
He has not eyes nor blood.
Your lady's beads may shine, he lies
Stretched cold within the wood.
—But she shall never lose again
The wild cat moaning in her brain."

The Swallow

THE morning that my baby came
They found a baby swallow dead,
And saw a something hard to name,
Flit moth-like over baby's bed.

My joy, my flower, my baby dear
Sleeps on my bosom well, but Oh!
If in the Autumn of the year
When swallows gather round and go——.

An Afterthought on Apples

While yet unfallen apples throng the bough,
To ripen as they cling
In lieu of the lost bloom, I ponder how
Myself did flower in so rough a spring;
And was not set in grace
When the first flush was gone from summer's face.
How in my tardy season, making one
Of a crude congregation, sour in sin,
I nodded like a green-clad mandarin,
Averse from all that savoured of the sun.
But now throughout these last autumnal weeks
What skyey gales mine arrogant station thresh,
What sunbeams mellow my beshadowed cheeks,
What steely storms cudgel mine obdurate flesh;
Less loath am I to see my fellows launch
Forth from my side into the air's abyss,
Whose own stalk is
Grown untenacious of its wonted branch.
And yet, O God,
Tumble me not at last upon the sod,
Or, still superb above my fallen kind,
Grant not my golden rind
To the black starlings screaming in the mist.
Nay, rather on some gentle day and bland
Give Thou Thyself my stalk a little twist,
Dear Lord, and I shall fall into Thy hand.

Margaret's Song

Too soothe and mild your lowland airs
For one whose hope is gone;
I'm thinking of a little tarn,
Brown, very lone.

Would now the tall swift mists could lay
Their wet grasp on my hair,
And the great natures of the hills
Round me friendly were.

In vain!—For taking hills your plains
Have spoilt my soul, I think,
But would my feet were going down
Towards the brown tarn's brink.

The Seed Shop

HERE in a quiet and dusty room they lie,
Faded as crumbled stone or shifting sand,
Forlorn as ashes, shrivelled, scentless, dry—
Meadows and gardens running through my hand.

Dead that shall quicken at the call of Spring,
Sleepers to stir beneath June's magic kiss,
Though birds pass over, unremembering,
And no bee seek here roses that were his.

In this brown husk a dale of hawthorn dreams,
A cedar in this narrow cell is thrust
That will drink deeply of a century's streams,
These lilies shall make summer on my dust.

Here in their safe and simple house of death,
Sealed in their shells a million roses leap;
Here I can blow a garden with my breath,
And in my hand a forest lies asleep.

New Horizons

NEVER was there path our childhood used to roam
So long it led not in the evening home;

Nor could the magic of the unknown track
Prevail against the hearth that called us back.

Over the same hill-tops, wild-rose or grey,
Our evening and our twilight always lay;

And when the night fell all the unknown stars
Grew homely shining through our window bars.

Now we have fared to the country o'er the hill,
And unknown journeys lie beyond us still;—

Ways unadventured, countless paths to roam,
But none that leads us in the evening home.

Onward, not homeward, some adventure calls
With every dawn, and every evening falls

Over new horizons, wild-rose or grey,
And old stars shining on the unknown way

Strange look and far, not those we saw of old
Safe moored in haven skies above our fold.

The Shepherdess

She walks—the lady of my delight—
  A shepherdess of sheep.
Her flocks are thoughts. She keeps them white;
  She guards them from the steep.
She feeds them on the fragrant height,
  And folds them in for sleep.

She roams maternal hills and bright,
  Dark valleys safe and deep.
Into that tender breast at night
  The chastest stars may peep.
She walks—the lady of my delight—
  A shepherdess of sheep.

She holds her little thoughts in sight,
  Though gay they run and leap.
She is so circumspect and right;
  She has her soul to keep.
She walks—the lady of my delight—
  A shepherdess of sheep.

Earth and Her Birds

Brave birds that climb those blue
  Dawn-tinted towers,
With notes like showers of dew
  From elf-tossed flowers,
Shake your mad wings in mirth,
  Betray, betray
  The secret thoughts of May,
That heaven, once more, may marry our wild earth.

Dark gipsy, she would dance
  Unmated still,
Challenging, glance for glance,
  Her lord's high will,
But that her thoughts take wing
  While she lies sleeping;
  And, into glory leaping,
Like birds, at sunrise, to her bridegroom sing.

See how with cheeks aglow
  And lips apart,
While warm winds, murmuring low,
  Lay bare her heart,
She dreams that she can hide
  Its rosy light
  In ferns and flowers this night,
And swim like Dian through this hawthorn-tide.

Then shame her, lavrocks, shame her,
  At break of day,
That heaven may trap and tame her
  This mad sweet May.
Let all your feathered choir
  Leave those warm nests
  Between her dawn-flushed breasts,
And soar to heaven, singing her young desire.

Service of all the Dead

Between the avenue of cypresses,
All in their scarlet cloaks, and surplices
Of linen, go the chaunting choristers,
The priests in gold and black, the villagers.

And all along the path to the cemetery
The round, dark heads of men crowd silently,
And black-scarved faces of women-folk, wistfully
Watch at the banner of death, and the mystery.

And at the foot of a grave a father stands
With sunken head, and forgotten, folded hands;
And at the foot of a grave a woman kneels
With pale shut face, and neither hears nor feels

The coming of the chaunting choristers
Between the avenues of cypresses,
The silence of the many villagers,
The candle-flames beside the surplices.

The Early Morning

The moon on the one hand, the dawn on the other:
The moon is my sister, the dawn is my brother.
The moon on my left and the dawn on my right.
My brother, good morning: my sister, good night.

The Cock and the Hen

In the deep green wood,
All the pleasant weather,
Cock bird and hen bird
Make love together,
Till the cruel shooting men
Kill the cock and kill the hen.

When the hen and cock are fit
For the pot and for the spit,
Then the white-capped cooking maids
Strip off every feather—
Plumage softest grey of hue,
Burnished gold and green and blue;
Maids as cruel as the men
Roast the cock and boil the hen.

The Praise of Dust

" What of vile dust ? " the preacher said.
Methought the whole world woke,
The dead stone lived beneath my foot,
And my whole body spoke.

" You that played tyrant to the dust,
And stamp its wrinkled face,
This patient star that flings you not
Far into homeless space.

" Come down out of your dusty shrine
The living dust to see,
The flowers that at your sermon's end
Stand blazing silently.

" Rich white and blood-red blossom, stones,
Lichens like fire encrust ;
A gleam of blue, a glare of gold,
The mission of the dust.

" Pass them all by : till, as you come
Where, at a city's edge,
Under a tree—I know it well—
Under a lattice ledge,

" The sunshine falls on one brown head.
You, too, O cold of clay,
Eater of stones, may haply hear
The trumpets of that day,

" When God to all his paladins
By his own splendour swore
To make a fairer face than heaven,
Of dust and nothing more."

O SWEETHEART, hear you
  Your lover's tale;
A man shall have sorrow
  When friends him fail.

For he shall know then
  Friends be untrue
And a little ashes
  Their words come to.

But one unto him
  Will softly move
And softly woo him
  In ways of love.

His hand is under
  Her smooth round breast;
So he who has sorrow
  Shall have rest.

The Darkling Thrush

I LEANT upon a coppice gate
  When Frost was spectre-gray,
And Winter's dregs made desolate
  The weakening eye of day.
The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
  Like strings of broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted nigh
  Had sought their household fires.

The land's sharp features seemed to be
  The Century's corpse outleant,
His crypt the cloudy canopy,
  The wind his death-lament.
The ancient pulse of germ and birth
  Was shrunken hard and dry,
And every spirit upon earth
  Seemed fervourless as I.

At once a voice outburst among
  The bleak twigs overhead
In a full-hearted evensong
  Of joy illimited;
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,
  In blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
  Upon the growing gloom.

So little cause for carollings
  Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
  Afar or nigh around,
That I could think there trembled through
  His happy good-night air
Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew
  And I was unaware.

Lost Love

His eyes are quickened so with grief,
He can watch a grass or leaf
Every instant grow ; he can
Clearly through a flint wall see,
Or watch the startled spirit flee
From the throat of a dead man.
Across two counties he can hear,
And catch your words before you speak.
The woodlouse or the maggot's weak
Clamour rings in his sad ear ;
And noise so slight it would surpass
Credence :—drinking sound of grass,
Worm talk, clashing jaws of moth
Chumbling holes in cloth :
The groan of ants who undertake
Gigantic loads for honour's sake,
Their sinews creak, their breath comes thin :
Whir of spiders when they spin,
And minute whispering, mumbling, sighs
Of idle grubs and flies.
This man is quickened so with grief,
He wanders god-like or like thief
Inside and out, below, above,
Without relief seeking lost love.

The Sixth Day

And God said, "Let us make man in our image and let him have dominion" . . .

God made you in His image, yet I saw
You stoop and seize a blind mole from the snare.
Blind.
Blind with terror . . . blind.
Your teeth gleamed bare behind the taut, white lips.
The trapper's law knows neither hate nor love.
You watched it paw,
Frantic with lust of life, the yielding air,
And were amused.
God's Image!
Did you care, pitying one moment, see the swift hands claw
For life and darkness, know and hate your trap?
I saw your knuckles gleam, your hand swing free;
A cry;
The blind face crashed against a wall.
Then death and stillness, and—
You grinned.

Mayhap,
Snaring the blind mole of humanity,
God made you in His image after all.

Beside the Bed

Someone has shut the shining eyes, straightened and
folded
The wandering hands quietly covering the unqui
breast :
So, smoothed and silenced you lie, like a child, not aga
to be questioned or scolded ;
But, for you, not one of us believes that this is rest.

Not so to close the windows down can cloud and dead
The blue beyond : or to screen the wavering flame su
due its breath :
Why, if I lay my cheek to your cheek, your grey lips, li
dawn, would quiver and redden,
Breaking into the old, odd smile at this fraud of death.

Because all night you have not turned to us or spoken
It is time for you to wake ; your dreams were never ve
deep :
I, for one, have seen the thin, bright, twisted threads
them dimmed suddenly and broken,
This is only a most piteous pretence of sleep !

Spring Goeth all in White

Spring goeth all in white,
Crowned with milk-white may :
In fleecy flocks of light
O'er heaven the white clouds stray :

White butterflies in the air ;
White daisies prank the ground :
The cherry and hoary pear
Scatter their snow around.

To a Fair Infant

WHAT right have I to look on thee
Thou little fragrant, flower-like creature ;
These sad, experienced eyes of mine
To steal one stainless ray from thine ;
With greeting sere—this tongue, these lips
To dim with swift o'ershadowing sighs
Thine own soft mouth's luxuriancies ?

Yet, what frail virtue's left in me,
What little fair in mien or feature—
Ere half my mischief is begun,
Thou, like a far, full-flowering sun
Wouldst with thy dazzling looks eclipse :
Thus daisies, with white spark divine
Darken the grass wherein they shine.

No longer may mine eyes endure
The springtide blueness of thine own
Like daylight skies with starlight sown.
Down in thy lap—outspread in pure
White-muslined sweetness miniature
Dazzled, abased, my face I hide !
Here, rocked in spirit I abide
Now, by the sweet security
Of thy quaint, mock maturity,
Whilst thou, maternal elf—
A heavenly kingdom of thyself
Over me in thy baby mother-hood
With shinings ministerial dost in faery silence brood.

Cornish Wind

THERE is a wind in Cornwall that I know
From any other wind, because it smells
Of the warm honey breath of heather-bells
And of the sea's salt; and these meet and flow
With such sweet savour in such sharpness met
That the astonished sense in ecstasy
Tastes the ripe earth and the unvintaged sea.
Wind out of Cornwall, wind, if I forget:
Not in the tunnelled streets where scarce men breathe
The air they live by, but whatever seas
Blossom in foam, wherever merchant bees
Volubly traffic upon any heath:
If I forget, shame me! or if I find
A wind in England like my Cornish wind.

Green Candles

" THERE's someone at the door," said gold candlestick:
" Let her in quick, let her in quick ! "
" There is a small hand groping at the handle :
Why don't you turn it ? " asked green candle.

" Don't go, don't go," said the Heppelwhite chair,
" lest you find a strange lady there."
" Yes, stay where you are," whispered the white wall :
" there is nobody there at all."

" I know her little foot," grey carpet said :
" Who but I should know her light tread ? "
" She shall come in," answered the open door,
" and not," said the room, " go out any more."

Everyone Sang

Everyone suddenly burst out singing;
And I was filled with such delight
As prisoned birds must find in freedom
Winging wildly across the white
Orchards and dark green fields; on; on; and out of sight.

Everyone's voice was suddenly lifted,
And beauty came like the setting sun.
My heart was shaken with tears and horror
Drifted away . . . O but every one
Was a bird; and the song was wordless; the singing will never be done.

Outside the Carlton

The death of the grey withered grass
  Of man's is a sign,
  And his life is as wine
That is spilt from a half-shivered glass.
  At a quarter to nine
  Went Dives to dine. . . .
(Man, it is said, is as grass.)

Riches and plunder had met
  To furnish his feast—
  Both succulent beast
And fish from the fisherman's net;
  While he tasteth of dishes
  And all his soul wishes—
Nor knoweth his hour had been set.

The death of the pale-sodden hay
  'Neath the feet of the kine
  Is to man for a sign;
At the striking of ten he was grey,
  And they carried him out
  Stiff-strangled with gout.
(Man, it is said, is as hay.)

The Visit

" SWEETHEART, is it you ? I've been all night looking out
for you,
But how cold your hands are, and your face is so pale.
Thunder and lightning, and the soldiery about for you:
But yesterday you promised, and I knew you wouldn't
fail."
" Yes, yes, it's me, and I'm sorry I am so late for you,
Dearest, and I'm sorry my fingers are so cold :
But you said, ' Whatever happens, come to-morrow,
and I'll wait for you ' :
So I thought I'd come and see you, though a dead man
a day old."

" Lovely, sweetheart, quick and come to bed to me,
For I'm sick with longing for you, and the night is
nearly gone,
We shall easily forget, O sweetheart, what you've said
to me,
And you'll soon get warm, and there's still an hour till
dawn."
" Death when the dawn comes will take me and make
from me
A sorry love for women, the worm's delight :
But the pains of death and hell like water I shall shake
from me
For this our last and our wonderfullest night."

The Fairy Wood

It was the Fairy Wood :
We called it so, for all we knew of good
And beautiful and beyond belief remote
Dwelt in those brakes of foxglove and bright fern
Whose feathery birches seemed to poise and float
Over young grasses sung through by a burn
And birds made music in that solitude.

Not far away the tide
With the changing weather roared and moaned and sighed
And that salt savour mid the branches hung
And that blue splendour flashed across the green
And sea-blue and leaf-green together clung
Inseparable, and the skyey blue between
Made a third rapture in that singing pride.

For colour seemed to sing
In that young shade and living light of spring ;
And in the happy birds and chattering stream
And whisper of leaves and that sea-breathing voice
And winds that walked the pathways of my dream
And your clear notes that bade all these rejoice
Song seemed no less than colour on the wing.

The Tired Man

I AM a quiet gentleman,
And I would sit and dream;
But my wife is on the hillside,
Wild as a hill-stream.

I am a quiet gentleman,
And I would sit and think;
But my wife is walking the whirlwind
Through night as black as ink.

O, give me a woman of my race
As well controlled as I,
And let us sit by the fire,
Patient till we die!

Sheep and Lambs

All in the April evening,
April airs were abroad;
The sheep with their little lambs
Passed me by on the road.

The sheep with their little lambs
Passed me by on the road;
All in the April evening
I thought on the Lamb of God.

The lambs were weary, and crying
With a weak, human cry.
I thought on the Lamb of God
Going meekly to die.

Up in the blue, blue mountains
Dewy pastures are sweet;
Rest for the little bodies,
Rest for the little feet.

But for the Lamb of God,
Up on the hill-top green,
Only a Cross of shame
Two stark crosses between.

All in the April evening,
April airs were abroad;
I saw the sheep with their lambs,
And thought on the Lamb of God.

"Lochaber no more!"

FAREWELL to Lochaber, farewell to the glen;
No more will he wander Lochaber again!
Lochaber no more! Lochaber no more!
The lad will return to Lochaber no more.
The trout will come back from the depths of the sea,
The bird from the wilderness back to the tree;
Flowers to the mountain, and tides to the shore,
But he will return to Lochaber no more!

Oh why should the hills last, that never were young,
Unperishing stars in the heavens be hung,
Be constant the seasons, undrying the stream,
And he that was gallant be gone like a dream?
Brave songs will be singing in isles of the west,
But he will be silent who sang them the best;
The dance will be waiting, the pipes will implore,
But he will return to Lochaber no more.

Child of the forest! profound is thy sleep,
The valley that loved thee awakes but to weep,
When our fires are rekindled at dawn of the morn,
Our griefs burn afresh and our prayers are forlorn;
The night falls disconsolate, bringing no peace,
No hope for our dreams, for our sighs no release;
In vain come the true hearts and look from the door,
For thou wilt return to Lochaber no more!

The Old Woman

As a white candle
In a holy place,
So is the beauty
Of an agèd face.

As the spent radiance
Of the winter sun,
So is a woman
With her travail done.

Her brood gone from her,
And her thoughts as still
As the waters
Under a ruined mill.

The Green River

I KNOW a green grass path that leaves the field,
And like a running river, winds along
Into a leafy wood where is no throng
Of birds at noon-day, and no soft throats yield
Their music to the moon. The place is seal'd,
An unclaim'd sovereignty of voiceless song,
And all the unravish'd silences belong
To some sweet singer lost or unreveal'd.

So is my soul become a silent place.
Oh may I wake from this uneasy night
To find a voice of music manifold.
Let it be shape of sorrow with wan face,
Or Love that swoons on sleep, or else delight
That is as wide-eyed as a marigold.

The Gipsy Girl

" Come, try your skill, kind gentlemen,
A penny for three tries ! "
Some threw and lost, some threw and won
A ten-a-penny prize.

She was a tawny gipsy girl,
A girl of twenty years,
I liked her for the lumps of gold
That jingled from her ears ;

I liked the flaring yellow scarf
Bound loose about her throat,
I liked her showy purple gown
And flashy velvet coat.

A man came up, too loose of tongue,
And said no good to her ;
She did not blush as Saxons do,
Or turn upon the cur ;

She fawned and whined " Sweet gentleman,
A penny for three tries ! "
—But oh, the den of wild things in
The darkness of her eyes !

A Nocturne

The Moon has gone to her rest,
A full hour ago.
The Pleiads have found a nest
In the waves below.
Slow, the Hours one by one
In Midnight's footsteps creep.
Lovers who lie alone
Soon wake to weep.
Slow-footed tortoise Hours, will ye not hasten on,
Till from his prison
In the golden East
A new day shall have risen,
And the last stars be gone,
Like guests belated from a bridal feast ?
When the long night is done
Then shall ye sleep.

Babylon

The blue dusk ran between the streets: my love was winge
within my mind,
It left to-day and yesterday and thrice a thousand yea
behind.
To-day was past and dead for me, for from to-day my fe
had run
Through thrice a thousand years to walk the ways of ancie
Babylon.
On temple top and palace roof the burnished gold flu
back the rays
Of a red sunset that was dead and lost beyond a million da
The tower of heaven turns darker blue, a starry spar
now begins;
The mystery and magnificence, the myriad beauty and the si
Come back to me. I walk beneath the shadowy multitude
towers;
Within the gloom the fountain jets its pallid mist in l
flowers.
The waters lull me and the scent of many gardens, and I he
Familiar voices, and the voice I love is whispering in
ear.
Oh, real as in dream all this; and then a hand on mine
laid:
The wave of phantom time withdraws; and that you
Babylonian maid,
One drop of beauty left behind from all the flowing
that tide,
Is looking with the selfsame eyes, and here in Ireland by
side.
Oh light our life in Babylon, but Babylon has taken wings,
While we are in the calm and proud possession of eter
things.

Consider

Now green comes springing o'er the heath,
And each small bird with lifted breath
Cries, " Brother, consider the joy there is in living ! "
" Consider ! Consider ! " the jolly throstle saith !

The golden gorse, the wild thyme, frail
And sweet, the butter cowslip pale,
Cry " Sisters, consider the peace that comes with giving !
And render, and render your sweet and scented breath ! "

Now men, come walking o'er the heath
To mark this pretty world beneath,
Bethink them : " Consider what joy might lie in living,
None striving, constraining none, and thinking not on
Death."

At Night

Home, home from the horizon far and clear,
  Hither the soft wings sweep;
Flocks of the memories of the day draw near
  The dovecote doors of sleep.

O, which are they that come through sweetest light
  Of all these homing birds?
Which with the straightest and the swiftest flight?
  Your words to me, your words!

The Rowers' Chant

Row till the land dip 'neath
The sea from view.
Row till a land peep up,
A home for you.

Row till the mast sing songs
Welcome and sweet,
Row till the waves, outstripped,
Give up, dead beat.

Row till the sea-nymphs rise
To ask you why
Rowing you tarry not
To hear them sigh.

Row till the stars grow bright
Like certain eyes.
Row till the noon be high
As hopes you prize.

Row till you harbour in
All longing's port.
Row till you find all things
For which you sought.

Dream-Merchandise

If in the traffic of my dreams
I might a wayside pedlar be,
Or traveller beside slow streams,
Or trader of the sea ;

If I might till my garden-rood
Contented with perfection there,
I should have careless livelihood,
To spend and not to spare.

But interest in man's large estate,
His forfeit in the bonds of time,
The matter of his mortal fate
Is matter of my rhyme.

So urges Death his dateless claim,
So comes the scrip of Age o'erdue ;
And in the empty mart of fame
My song is bankrupt too.

Merchant of Dreams, compare with mine
Your tale of traffic not in gold.
What though our credit show decline,
And bills of lading old ;

Be dreams our venture still ; our quest
The country of the prophet's ken ;
The unbuilded city, the unrest
Divine of mortal men.

The Snail

Veined and lustrous, ringed with pearl and azure,
With amber flecked, and orange and black,
Marvellous is the house of his abiding,
The curved, frail mansion on his glistening back.

Trekking from clump to clump of yellowing grasses,
On yielding mounds of pale, wind-patterned sand,
He leaves a path of silver as the night falls
And the grey twilight wavers from the land.

Then the salt spray from seaward, the moon shining
Through crystalline beads of dew on root and stem;
Beetles and worms and fluttering moths and spiders,
Blind, thrusting moles, and blind bats over them.

He goes his way, with quivering horns advancing
To green, alluring grasses, gravely intent,
Shrinking when rabbits scurry past to warren
And foxes sidle by with careless scent.

Dawn shows an oasis of grass and nettles;
In viscous joy he feeds and climbs and clings. . . .
His house is ringed with azure, pearl and amber,
Perched high in leafage where the young sap sings.

For a Guest Room

All words are said,
And may it fall
That, crowning these,
You here shall find
A friendly bed,
A sheltering wall,
Your body's ease,
A quiet mind.

May you forget
In happy sleep
The world that still
You hold as friend,
And may it yet
Be ours to keep
Your friendly will
To the world's end.

For he is blest
Who, fixed to shun
All evil, when
The worst is known,
Counts, east and west,
When life is done,
His debts to men
In love alone.

Tall Nettles

Tall nettles cover up, as they have done
These many springs, the rusty harrow, the plough
Long worn out, and the roller made of stone :
Only the elm butt tops the nettles now.

This corner of the farmyard I like most :
As well as any bloom upon a flower
I like the dust on the nettles, never lost
Except to prove the sweetness of a shower.

The Return

See, they return; ah, see the tentative
Movements, and the slow feet,
The trouble in the pace and the uncertain
Wavering!

See, they return, one, and by one,
With fear, as half-awakened;
As if the snow should hesitate
And murmur in the wind,
and half turn back;
These were the "Wing'd-with-Awe,"
Inviolable.

Gods of the wingèd shoe!
With them the silver hounds,
Sniffing the trace of air!

Haie! Haie!
These were the swift to harry;
These the keen-scented;
These were the souls of blood.

Slow on the leash,
pallid the leash-men!

The Plougher

Sunset and silence ! A man : around him earth savage, earth broken ;
Beside him two horses—a plough !

Earth savage, earth broken, the brutes, the dawn man there in the sunset,
And the Plough that is twin to the Sword, that is founder of cities !

" Brute-tamer, plough-maker, earth-breaker ! Can'st hear ? There are ages between us.
s it praying you are as you stand there alone in the sunset ?

" Surely our sky-born gods can be naught to you, earth child and earth master ?
urely your thoughts are of Pan, or of Wotan, or Dana ?

Yet why give thoughts to the gods ? Has Pan led your brutes where they stumble ?
Has Dana numbed pain of the child-bed, or Wotan put hands to your plough ?

What matter your foolish reply ! O, man, standing lone and bowed earthward,
Your task is a day near its close. Give thanks to the night-giving God."

lowly the darkness falls, the broken lands blend with the savage ;
he brute-tamer stands by the brutes, a head's breadth only above them.

head's breadth ? Ay, but therein is hell's depth, and the height up to heaven,
nd the thrones of the gods and their halls, their chariots, purples, and splendours.

The Kingfisher

It was the Rainbow gave thee birth,
And left thee all her lovely hues;
And, as her mother's name was Tears,
So runs it in thy blood to choose
For haunts the lonely pools, and keep
In company with trees that weep.

Go you and, with such glorious hues,
Live with proud peacocks in green parks;
On lawns as smooth as shining glass,
Let every feather show its marks;
Get thee on boughs and clap thy wings
Before the windows of proud kings.

Nay, lovely bird, thou art not vain;
Thou hast no proud ambitious mind:
I also love a quiet place
That's green, away from all mankind;
A lonely pool, and let a tree
Sigh with her bosom over me.

Awake, My Heart, to be Loved

Awake my heart, to be loved, awake, awake!
The darkness silvers away, the morn doth break,
It leaps in the sky: unrisen lustres slake
The o'ertaken moon. Awake, O heart, awake!

She too that loveth awaketh and hopes for thee;
Her eyes already have sped the shades that flee,
Already they watch the path thy feet shall take:
Awake, O heart, to be loved, awake, awake!

And if thou tarry from her,—if this could be,—
She cometh herself, O heart, to be loved, to thee;
For thee would unashaméd herself forsake:
Awake to be loved, my heart, awake, awake!

Awake, the land is scattered with light, and see,
Uncanopied sleep is flying from field and tree:
And blossoming boughs of April in laughter shake;
Awake, O heart, to be loved, awake, awake!

Lo all things wake and tarry and look for thee:
She looketh and saith, "O sun, now bring him to me.
Come more adored, O adored, for his coming's sake,
And awake my heart to be loved: awake, awake!"

Rest

To spend the long warm days
Silent beside the silent-stealing streams,
To see, not gaze,
To hear, not listen, thoughts exchanged for dreams:

See clouds that slowly pass
Trailing their shadows o'er the far faint down
And ripening grass,
While yet the meadows wear their starry crown.

To hear the breezes sigh
Cool in the silver leaves like falling rain,
Pause and go by,
Tired wanderers o'er the solitary plain:

See far from all affright
Shy river creatures play hour after hour,
And night by night
Low in the West the white moon's folding flower.

Thus lost to human things,
To blend at last with Nature and to hear
What song she sings
Low to herself when there is no one near.

After Two Years

She is all so slight
And tender and white
  As a May morning.
She walks without hood
At dusk. It is good
  To hear her sing.

It is God's will
That I shall love her still
  As He loves Mary,
And night and day
I will go forth to pray
  That she love me.

She is as gold
Lovely, and far more cold.
  Do thou pray with me,
For if I win grace
To kiss twice her face
  God has done well to me.

The Dromedary

In dreams I see the Dromedary still,
  As once in a gay park I saw him stand:
  A thousand eyes in vulgar wonder scanned
His humps and hairy neck, and gazed their fill
At his lank shanks and mocked with laughter shrill.
  He never moved: and if his Eastern land
  Flashed on his eye with stretches of hot sand,
It wrung no mute appeal from his proud will.

He blinked upon the rabble lazily;
  And still some trace of majesty forlorn
And a coarse grace remained: his head was high,
  Though his gaunt flanks with a great mange were w
There was not any yearning in his eye,
  But on his lips and nostril infinite scorn.

Too Late

" O Virgins, very lovely in your troop,
O Virgins very lovely, very white,
How is it that your lilies droop ?
How is it that the lamps you bear are not alight ?

Why are you bending downward from the hill ?
Bright is it on the hill as for a feast."
Trembling they sped as to fulfil
Some grievous prophecy ; nor heeded me the least.

Downward they passed. . . . Oh, they were very fair,
But stricken as the frosted leaves to doom !
Their eyes I saw. . . . Bright with despair
Their eyes, and very lamps to light them to their doom.

Full were their looks of love and sorrowing
As they passed by me, shaking out a spell
Of sighs, of balms. And is it such a thing
Can be, that they were hurrying to Hell ?

The Star

Thro' the roaring boughs of sin
  Burns a solitary star.
It is of the cherubin,
  It has all the joys that are ;
Burning thro' the roaring boughs
On the horn of heaven's house.

Black the boughs against the air,
  Shaken with the wind of time :
White the star, and cherub-fair,
  An arum lily in its prime
Breathing everlastingly
The quiet of eternity.

Hooded owls make ceaseless moan
  Thro' the sin-excited boughs.
On the golden finial-stone
  Crowning heaven's purple house
Burns the star, remote, unstirred,
Beacon of the holy Word.

The One

Though you are gone and I am left, alone,
With but this shadow by my body thrown,
And nothing more;
Though you are gone, and I am feeling poor,
Yet still the root is fed
Of my self-love, and but the leaves are dead.

But if, when I am old, and in the street
With a young love that's bought, we three should meet
And she should say,
"Who's that old hag that stares so hard this way"—
What answer should she meet?
May I drop dead in silence at your feet!

The Unwritten Song

Now where's a song for our small dear,
With her quaint voice and her quick ear,
To sing—for gnats and bats to hear—
  At twilight in her bed ?
A song of tiny elfin things
With shiny, silky, silvery wings,
Footing it in fairy rings,
  And kissing overhead.

A song of starry glow-worms' lights
In the long grass of shadowy nights,
And flitting showers of firefly flights,
  Where summer woods hang deep ;
Of hovering, noiseless owls that find
Their way at dark ; and of a kind
And drowsy, drowsy ocean wind
  That puts the sea to sleep.

But where's the song for our small dear,
With her quaint voice and her quick ear,
To sing—for dreamland things to hear—
  And hush herself to sleep ?

Night Thoughts

THERE's a wind to-night in the apple-trees,
My father below has turned his keys,
But how up there shall I sleep at ease—
There's a wind to night in the apple-trees ?
Far off, beyond my half-shut doors
The clock ticks slowly, with never a pause.
In the darkness I hear the fluttering blind ;
I will go to the window, what shall I find ?

O, fearfully still is the moonlit ride
Where apple blossom falls like a tide :
But can that be a storm-blown shadow, see,
That moves like a robber from tree to tree ?
I can see him too at the high road edge
There, where blossom blows over the hedge !
What a snow of moonlit blossom ! Hark !
There's a dog in the village beginning to bark.
While calmly beyond my half-shut doors
The clock ticks slowly with never a pause.

Rooks

THERE, where the rusty iron lies,
The rooks are cawing all the day.
Perhaps no man, until he dies,
Will understand them, what they say.

That evening makes the sky like clay.
The slow wind waits for night to rise.
The world is half content. But they

Still trouble all the trees with cries,
That know, and cannot put away,
The yearning to the soul that flies
From day to night, from night to day.

The Mad Woman of Punnet's Town

A-swell within her billowed skirts
  Like a great ship with sails unfurled,
The mad woman goes gallantly
  Upon the ridges of her world.

With eagle nose and wisps of gray
  She strides upon the westward hills,
Swings her umbrella joyously
  And waves it to the waving mills.

Talking and chuckling as she goes
  Indifferent both to sun and rain,
With all that merry company
  The singing children of her brain.

An Autobiography

Wales England wed ; so I was bred. 'Twas merry London
gave me breath.
I dreamt of love, and fame : I strove. But Ireland taught
me love was best :
And Irish eyes, and London cries, and streams of Wales
may tell the rest.
What more than these I asked of Life I am content to
have from Death.

Gloire de Dijon

When she rises in the morning
I linger to watch her;
She spreads the bath-cloth underneath the window
And the sunbeams catch her
Glistening white on the shoulders,
While down her sides the mellow
Golden shadow glows as
She stoops to the sponge, and her swung breasts
Sway like full-blown yellow
Gloire de Dijon roses.

She drips herself with water, and her shoulders
Glisten as silver; they crumble up
Like wet and falling roses, and I listen
For the sluicing of their rain-dishevelled petals.
In the window full of sunlight
Concentrates her golden shadow
Fold on fold, until it glows as
Mellow as the glory roses.

To a Blue Tit

Day after day you who are as free as air
(And how much freer, then, than I)
Venture your birthright, dare
That heavenly liberty, to fly
And feed upon my hand : I marvel why.

No other bird of your bright company
Commits a folly so divine !
Their chatter bids you be
Wary of guile—of some design
That you alone are conscious is not mine.

And even I, with less to lose than you,
I, wingless prisoner of the dust,
Would shun risks you renew
Each morning, not because you must,
But in a sweet wild miracle of trust.

Bird, as you call me to the window-ledge
With flashes and blue flutterings,
It seems the grey world's edge ;
And, with the thrill your light touch brings,
I am your kin and know the lift of wings.

Cargoes

Quinquireme of Nineveh from distant Ophir
Rowing home to haven in sunny Palestine,
With a cargo of ivory
And apes and peacocks,
Sandalwood, cedarwood, and sweet, white wine.

Stately Spanish galleon coming from the Isthmus,
Dipping through the Tropics by the palm green shores
With a cargo of diamonds,
Emeralds, amethysts,
Topazes, and cinnamon, and gold moidores.

Dirty British coaster with a salt-caked smoke stack
Butting through the Channel in the mad March days
With a cargo of Tyne coal,
Road rails, pig lead,
Firewood, ironware, and cheap tin trays.

The Game

BOY : Pretty one, pretty one, cover your eyes.
GIRL : What will you do ?
BOY : I will teach you a game.
GIRL : Well, I have covered them. What can you see?
BOY : Two little fruits that are ripe for the mouth,
Ripe, and yet each of them tipped with a bud.
GIRL : O, you ridiculous darling !
BOY : And there,
Flying from one to the other, as though
Fancying which were the sweeter to choose,
Wavers a butterfly.
GIRL : Over my breasts ?
BOY : Over their whiteness the red of its wings . .
GIRL : Dear little butterfly !
BOY : Beautiful fruits !
Now if you will you may capture it . . .
GIRL : Why,
Boy, it is you and the wings are your lips !

The Two Watchers

The south air swings the cowslips
Over the autumn floor;
An apple from the bough slips
Ripe-russet to the core.
Across the yellow dazzle, as a white drifting feather
I watch my white love wander, the fallen fruit to gather.

I watch my white love looting
Quietly, the season's sweet.
And a blackbird watches, fluting
With each little stoop for beat.
Over the yellow dazzle his measure thrills loud-throated:
Hushed in my heart's deep, thrills a wonder golden-noted.

When June is Come

WHEN June is come, then all the day
I'll sit with my love in the scented hay :
And watch the sunshot palaces high,
That the white clouds build in the breezy sky

She singeth, and I do make her a song,
And read sweet poems the whole day long :
Unseen as we lie in our haybuilt home.
O life is delight when June is come.

The Dug-Out

Why do you lie with your legs ungainly huddled,
And one arm bent across your sullen cold
Exhausted face? It hurts my heart to watch you,
Deep-shadow'd from the candle's guttering gold;
And you wonder why I shake you by the shoulder;
Drowsy, you mumble and sigh and turn your head. . .
You are too young to fall asleep for ever;
And when you sleep you remind me of the dead.

The Thief

When the paths of dream were mist-muffled,
And the hours were dim and small
(Through still nights on wet orchard grass
Like rain the apples fall),
Then naked-footed, secretly,
The thief dropped over the wall.

Apple-boughs spattered mist at him,
The dawn was as cold as death,
With a stealthy joy at the heart of it,
And the stir of a small sweet breath,
And a robin breaking his heart on song
As a young child sorroweth.

The thief's feet bruised wet lavender
Into sweet sharp surprise;
The orchard, full of pears and joy,
Smiled like a gold sunrise;
But the blind house stared down on him
With strange, white-lidded eyes.

He stood at the world's secret heart
In the haze-wrapt mystery;
And fat pears, mellow on the lip,
He supped like a honey-bee;
But the apples he crunched with sharp white teet
Were pungent, like the sea.

And the walls that ring this world about
Quivered like gossamer,
Till he heard, in the other worlds beyond,
The other peoples stir,
And met strange, sudden, shifting eyes
Through the filmy barrier. . . .

Early Morning Meadow Song

Now some may drink old vintage wine
To ladies gowned with rustling silk,
But we will drink to dairymaids,
And drink to them in rum and milk—
O, it's up in the morning early,
When the dew is on the grass,
And St. John's bell rings for matins,
And St. Mary's rings for mass!

The merry skylarks soar and sing,
And seem to Heaven very near—
Who knows what blessed inns they see,
What holy drinking songs they hear?
O, it's up in the morning early,
When the dew is on the grass,
And St. John's bell rings for matins,
And St. Mary's rings for mass!

The mushrooms may be priceless pearls
A queen has lost beside the stream;
But rum is melted rubies when
It turns the milk to golden cream!
O, it's up in the morning early,
When the dew is on the grass,
And St. John's bell rings for matins,
And St. Mary's rings for mass!

The New House

Now first, as I shut the door,
I was alone
In the new house; and the wind
Began to moan.

Old at once was the house,
And I was old;
My ears were teased with the dread
Of what was foretold,

Nights of storm, days of mist, without end;
Sad days when the sun
Shone in vain: old griefs and griefs
Not yet begun.

All was foretold me; naught
Could I foresee;
But I learnt how the wind would sound
After these things should be.

Eve

A SCARLET bird upon her shoulder's snow
Was perched, and whistled to his envious fellows;
A thousand tints of feathers lit the air,
Bewildering greens and reds and blues and yellows.

Primeval glories clustered in her form;
Uncramped her curves; she was the joy of Beauty.
An unseen angel drank her with his eyes,
Then trembled to the heart. His name was Duty.

While innocently naked thus she stood,
With lion-whelps and tiger-cubs around her,
A wall of creepers parted. From the wood
Leapt Adam—doubling Paradise—and found her

Lilac

O LILAC,
Whiter than swan's down,
Among your soft-green leaves,
Purer than snow
New fallen on the boughs,
The white butterfly fluttering
Over your fragrance
Is happy.
I watch you from my window,
And feel on my face and hair
The warm wind blowing across London.

I have many things to hurt me,—
Youth gone and life and friends uncertain ;
And no god will take me
And turn me into a lilac-tree,—
With the world beneath me
For my roots, and each springtime
A myriad tender hearts
For the winds to fondle,
And the startling candour of my blossom
For men to love.

Some god has done this to you,
O lilac,
And the butterfly does not fear you.

The Bridge

I CLIMBED the wide-world, twig and bent,
To halt before the void,
But there the spider's last reserves
Of cunning I deployed :

I drifted out my gossamers,
Upon the evening gale :
They caught a little on its wings
And tugged as tugs a sail.

Then holding to my gossamers,
I lifted up and swept
Across the airy interval
I never could have stept.

Wingless, I traversed the abyss
Ballooning on the wind,
But trailed a thread of gossamer
My enterprise behind;

Beyond the void I fastened it,
Till now the moth and midge
Go less secure upon their wings
Than I upon my bridge.

Sea Love

Tide be runnin' the great world over :
'Twas only last June month I mind that we
Was thinkin' the toss and the call in the breast of th
lover
So everlastin' as the sea.

Heer's the same little fishes that sputter and swim,
Wi' the moon's old glim on the grey wet sand ;
An' him no more to me nor me to him
Than the wind goin' over my hand.

For the Eightieth Birthday of George Meredith

A HEALTH, a ringing health, unto the king
Of all our hearts to-day! But what proud song
Should follow on the thought, nor do him wrong?
Unless the sea were harp, each mirthful string
Woven of the lightning of the nights of Spring,
And Dawn the lonely listener, glad and grave
With colours of the sea-shell and the wave
In brightening eye and cheek, there is none to sing!

Drink to him, as men upon an Alpine peak
Brim one immortal cup of crimson wine,
And into it drop one pure cold crust of snow,
Then hold it up, too rapturously to speak
And drink—to the mountains, line on glittering line,
Surging away into the sunset-glow.

O Dreamy, Gloomy, Friendly Trees

O DREAMY, gloomy, friendly Trees,
I came along your narrow track
To bring my gifts unto your knees
And gifts did you give back;
For when I brought this heart that burns—
These thoughts that bitterly repine—
And laid them here among the ferns
And the hum of boughs divine,
Ye, vastest breathers of the air,
Shook down with slow and mighty poise
Your coolness on the human care,
Your wonder on its toys,
Your greenness on the heart's despair,
Your darkness on its noise.

The Spirit of Air

Coral and clear emerald,
And amber from the sea,
Lilac-coloured amethyst,
Chalcedony ;
The lovely Spirit of Air
Floats on a cloud and doth ride,
Clad in the beauties of earth
Like a bride.

So doth she haunt me ; and words
Tell but a tithe of the tale.
Sings all the sweetness of Spring
Even in the nightingale ?
Nay, but with echoes she cries
Of the valley of love ;
Dews on the thorns at her feet,
And darkness above.

Intimacy

Since I have seen you do those intimate things
That other men but dream of; lull asleep
The sinister dark forest of your hair
And tie the bows that stir on your calm breast
Faintly as leaves that shudder in their sleep;
Since I have seen your stocking swallow up,
A swift black wind, the flame of your pale foot,
And deemed your slender limbs so meshed in silk
Sweet mermaid sisters drowned in their dark hair
I have not troubled very much with food
And wine has seemed like water from a well;
Pavements are built of fire, grass of thin flames;
All other girls grow dull as painted flowers,
Or flutter harmlessly like coloured flies
Whose wings are tangled in the net of leaves
Spread by frail trees that grow behind the eyes.

A Piper

A Piper in the streets to-day
Set up, and tuned, and started to play,
And away, away, away on the tide
Of his music we started; on every side
Doors and windows were opened wide,
And men left down their work and came,
And women with petticoats coloured like flame.
And little bare feet that were blue with cold
Went dancing back to the age of gold,
And all the world went gay, went gay,
For half an hour in the street to-day.

The Song of Tel the Nubian

SMALL dazzling face!
I shut you in my soul;
How can I perish now?

But thence a strange decay—
Your fragile gleaming wrists
Waver my days and shake my life
To golden tremors. I have no life at all,
Only thin golden tremors
That shudder over the abyss of days
Which hedged my spirit, my spirit your prison v
That shrunk like phantoms with your vivid beau

Towering and widening till
The sad moonless place
Throngs with a million torches
And spears of flaming wings.

But if our love be dying let it die
As the rose shedding secretly,
Or as a noble music's pause :
Let it move rhythmic as the laws
Of the sea's ebb, or the sun's ritual
When sovereignly he dies :
Then let a mourner rise and three times call
Upon our love, and the long echoes fall.

A Christmas Carol

Come, browse, my goats, Christ's Manger Hay,
Come, browse, in Christmas peace and love—
Ye that on Summer's green hills stray,
Or by her rain-flush'd rivers rove!
"We fear to browse," my brown goats say,
"A white dog snarls Christ's Bed above,
White dog with four flesh-meals a day—
He likes it not that goats he drove
Should munch God's meal.
He will not move."

The Parrot

The parrot's voice snaps out—
No good to contradict—
What he says he'll say again :
Dry facts, like biscuits,—

His voice and vivid colours
Of his breast and wings
Are immemoriably old ;
Old dowagers dressed in crimpèd satin
Boxed in their rooms
Like specimens beneath a glass
Inviolate—and never changing,
Their memory of emotions dead ;
The ardour of their summers
Sprayed like camphor
On their silken parasols
Entissued in a cupboard.

Reflective, but with never a new thought
The parrot sways upon his ivory perch—
Then gravely turns a somersault
Through rings nailed in the roof—
Much as the sun performs his antics
As he climbs the aerial bridge
We only see
Through crystal prisms in a falling rain.

Merveilleuses de nos Jours

"I WILL now call on Alberic Morphine to give us a
reading."
The rows of young women look up; their eyes glisten
they shiver
With the kind of emotion that's really very misleading;
All have fine eyes, yellow faces, vile clothes and a
"liver."

They smoke a great deal, bathe little, and wear no stays
Their artistic garments are made on the Grecian plan
They flock in their crowds to the latest "poetic" plays
And aspire to a union of souls—with some pimply young
man.

Song—Oh Fly Not, Pleasure

Oh fly not, Pleasure, pleasant-hearted Pleasure.
Fold me thy wings, I prithee, yet and stay.
For my heart no measure
Knows nor other treasure
To buy a garland for my love to-day.

And thou too, Sorrow, tender-hearted Sorrow.
Thou grey-eyed mourner, fly not yet away.
For I fain would borrow
Thy sad weeds to-morrow
To make a mourning for love's yesterday.

The voice of Pity, Time's divine dear Pity,
Moved me to tears. I dared not say them nay,
But went forth from the city
Making thus my ditty
Of fair love lost for ever and a day.

Alba

Awake! Awake!

I have gathered you a bunch of early lilac,
Still wet with dew, its little mouths half open.
Come down and take it, O my Lilac among Women.
The morning foams like wine; come down and drink!

This morning I wakened when the dawn-flower opened
Its wide, pale petals and the lark was rising.
I hied me to the forest that I might make fragrant
The song that was to call you from your dreams.

And lo! I came upon the tree of lilac,
That had blossomed like a dream on night's dark bosom.
I have gathered you a basket of its blossom,
Still wet with dew, its little mouths half open.

Come down and take it, O my Lilac among Women!

In a Field

The sun and moon I see
  Beside me in the grass :
The moon, a daisy's face
  As pure and fine as glass ;
The sun, a dandelion
  As golden as a pound—
O what a firmament
  Is this which I have found !

White stars the elm tree shakes
  To twinkle where they lie
As bright upon the earth
  As any in the sky.
This field is heaven's glass,
  And gazing in I see
What disembodied joys
  The future holds for me.

Lean out of the window,
Goldenhair,
I heard you singing
A merry air.

My book is closed;
I read no more,
Watching the fire dance
On the floor.

I have left my book,
I have left my room,
For I heard you singing
Through the gloom,

Singing and singing
A merry air.
Lean out of the window,
Goldenhair.

Wilderness

On lonely Kinton Green all day
The half-blind tottering plough-horse grieves,
Dim chimes and crowings far away
Come drifting down the wind like leaves;
And there the wood's a coloured mist,
So close the blackthorns intertwist,—

The blackthorns clung with heapen sloes
Blue-veiled to weather coming cold,
And ruby-tasselled shepherd's rose,
Where flock the finches plumed with gold,
And swarming brambles laden still
Though boys and wasps have ate their fill.

Here shining out on lubber boughs,
The lantern crabs hang gold with light
In smoke that mouldering leaves unhouse,
Like stars in frost as sharp and bright:
And here the blackbird deigns to choose
His blood-red haws by ones and twos.

Cob-spider runs his glistening maze
To murder doddering hungry flies;
Curt echo mocks the mocking jays,
The partridge in the stubble cries;
And Hob and Nob like blind men pass
Down to the Dog for pipe and glass.

L. L. M.

In the dark womb where I began
My mother's life made me a man.
Through all the months of human birth
Her beauty fed my common earth.
I cannot see, nor breathe, nor stir,
But through the death of some of her.

Down in the darkness of the grave
She cannot see the life she gave.
For all her love, she cannot tell
Whether I use it ill or well,
Nor knock at dusty doors to find
Her beauty dusty in the mind.

If the grave's gates could be undone,
She would not know her little son,
I am so grown. If we should meet,
She would pass by me in the street,
Unless my soul's face let her see
My sense of what she did for me.

What have I done to keep in mind
My debt to her and womankind?
What woman's happier life repays
Her for those months of wretched days?
For all my mouthless body leech'd
Ere Birth's releasing hell was reach'd?

What have I done, or tried, or said
In thanks to that dear woman dead?
Men triumph over women still,
Men trample women's rights at will,
And man's lust roves the world untamed.

O grave, keep shut lest I be shamed!

A Starving Bird

THERE droops a starving bird upon the frozen ledge;
No note he sang
At dawn, nor twitters now at dusk; and on the hedge
No berries hang.

How like this piteous, solitary and stricken bird,
Dying unfed,
Were I, if suddenly there came the darkening word
That thou wert dead!

To One Poem in a Silent Time

Who looked for thee, thou little song of mine?
  This winter of a silent poet's heart
  Is suddenly sweet with thee, but what thou art,
Mid-winter flower, I would I could divine.

Art thou a last one, orphan of thy line?
  Did the dead summer's last warmth foster thee?
  Or is Spring folded up unguessed in me,
And stirring out of sight,—and thou the sign?

Where shall I look—backward or to the morrow—
  For others of thy fragrance, secret child?
    Who knows if last things or if first things claim thee?

—Whether thou be the last smile of my sorrow,
  Or else a joy too sweet, a joy too wild?
    How, my December violet, shall I name thee?

Song from "The Tragic Mary"

I could wish to be dead!
Too quick with life were the tears I shed,
Too sweet for tears is the life I led;
And, ah, too lonesome my marriage-bed!
I could wish to be dead.

I could wish to be dead,
For just a word that rings in my head;
Too dear, too dear are the words he said,
They must never be remembered.
I could wish to be dead.

I could wish to be dead,
The wish to be loved is all mis-read,
And to love, one learns when one is wed,
Is to suffer bitter shame; instead
I could wish to be dead.

Spring

Wake up again, sad heart, wake up again !
(I hear the birds this morning singing sweet.)
Wake up again ! The sky was crystal clear,
And washed quite clean with rain ;
And far below my heart stirred with the year,
Stirred with the year and sighed. O pallid feet
Move now at last, O heart that sleeps with pain
Rise up and hear
The voices in the valleys, run to meet
The songs and shadows. O wake up again !

Put out green leaves, dead tree, put out green leaves !
(Last night the moon was soft and kissed the air.)
Put out green leaves ! The moon was in the skies,
All night she wakes and weaves.
The dew was on the grass like fairies' eyes,
Like fairies' eyes. O tree so black and bare,
Remember all the fruits, the full gold sheaves ;
For nothing dies :
The songs that are, are silences that were,
Summer was Winter. O put out green leaves !

Break through the earth, pale flower, break through th
earth !
(All day the lark has sung a madrigal.)
Break through the earth that lies not lightly yet
And waits thy patient birth,
Waits for the jonquil and the violet,
The violet. Full soon the heavy pall
Will be a bed, and in the noon of mirth
Some rivulet
Will bubble in my wilderness, some call
Will touch my silence. O break through the earth !

A Faery Song

We who are old, old and gay,
O so old!
Thousand of years, thousand of years,
If all were told:

Give to these children, new from the world,
Silence and love;
And the long dew-dropping hours of the night,
And the stars above:

Give to these children, new from the world,
Rest far from men.
Is anything better, anything better?
Tell us it then:

Us who are old, old and gay,
O so old!
Thousand of years, thousand of years,
If all were told.

To the Moon

" What have you looked at, Moon,
In your time,
Now long past your prime ? "
" O, I have looked at, often looked at
Sweet, sublime,
Sore things, shudderful, night and noon
In my time."

" What have you mused on, Moon,
In your day,
So aloof, so far away ? "
" O, I have mused on, often mused on
Growth, decay,
Nations alive, dead, mad, aswoon,
In my day ! "

" Have you much wondered, Moon,
On your rounds,
Self-wrapt, beyond Earth's bounds ? "
" Yea, I have wondered, often wondered
At the sounds.
Reaching me of the human tune
On my rounds."

" What do you think of it, Moon,
As you go ?
Is Life much, or no ? "
" O, I think of it, often think of it
As a show
God ought surely to shut up soon,
As I go."

The Hill

Breathless, we flung us on the windy hill,
Laughed in the sun, and kissed the lovely grass.
You said, ' Through glory and ecstasy we pass ;
Wind, sun, and earth remain, the birds sing still,
When we are old, are old. . . . .' ' And when we die
All's over that is ours ; and life burns on
Through other lovers, other lips,' said I,
—' Heart of my heart, our heaven is now, is won ! '

' We are Earth's best, that learnt her lesson here.
Life is our cry. We have kept the faith ! ' we said ;
' We shall go down with unreluctant tread
Rose-crowned into the darkness ! ' . . . Proud we were,
And laughed, that had such brave true things to say.
—And then you suddenly cried, and turned away.

No Child

I HEARD in the night the pigeons
  Stirring within their nest :
The wild pigeon's stir was tender,
  Like a child's hand at the breast.

I cried, " O, stir no more !
  (My breast was touched of tears),
O pigeons, make no stir—
  A childless woman hears."

Solitude

When you have tidied all things for the night,
And while your thoughts are fading to their sleep,
You'll pause a moment in the late firelight,
Too sorrowful to weep.

The large and gentle furniture has stood
In sympathetic silence all the day
With that old kindness of domestic wood ;
Nevertheless the haunted room will say :
" Some one must be away."

The little dog rolls over half awake,
Stretches his paws, yawns, looking up at you,
Wags his tail very slightly for your sake,
That you may feel he is unhappy too.

A distant engine whistles, or the floor
Creaks, or the wandering night-wind bangs a door.

Silence is scattered like a broken glass.
The minutes prick their ears and run about,
Then one by one subside again and pass
Sedately in, monotonously out.

You bend your head and wipe away a tear.
Solitude walks one heavy step more near.

Rest

On me to rest, my bird, my bird :
The swaying branches of my heart
Are blown by every wind toward
The home whereto their wings depart.

Build not your nest, my bird, on me :
I know no peace but ever sway :
O, lovely bird, be free, be free,
On the wild music of the day.

But sometimes when your wings would rest,
And winds are laid on quiet eves,
Come, I will bear you breast to breast,
And lap you close with loving leaves.

To Poets

We are the homeless, even as you,
Who hope and never can begin.
Our hearts are wounded through and through
Like yours, but our hearts bleed within.
We too make music, but our tones
'Scape not the barrier of our bones.

We have no comeliness like you.
We toil, unlovely, and we spin.
We start, return : we wind, undo :
We hope, we err, we strive, we sin,
We love : your love's not greater, but
The lips of our love's might stay shut.

We have the evil spirits too
That shake our soul with battle-din.
But we have an eviller spirit than you,
We have a dumb spirit within :
The exceeding bitter agony
But not the exceeding bitter cry.

By a Bier-Side

Man is a sacred city, built of marvellous earth.
Life was lived nobly here to give this body birth.
Something was in this brain and in this eager hand.
Death is so dumb and blind, Death cannot understand.
Death drifts the brain with dust and soils the young limbs' g
Death makes women a dream and men a traveller's story,
Death drives the lovely soul to wander under the sky,
Death opens unknown doors. It is most grand to die.

Love's Faintness Defied

Kiss me !
Are we not farther from to-day
Than is to-morrow ?
Steeped in reality, what love possesses,
Time doth but borrow ;
Kiss me !
Canst fear what any voice may say,
When all man's knowledge clearly must be guesses ?
Whilst joy is ours, like dogs to gain a bone
They'll fawn on us for what we leave alone.

Clasp me !
Like sand the falling moments close,
Stifling the weary :
To-morrow from to-day no force can sever,
Keep'st thou but near me.
Clasp me !
Canst shudder at a falling rose,
When folly's proof must be, to prate of " ever " ?
Whilst joy is ours, they'll seek us out to learn :
Those only died, who, loved, made faint return— !

When You are Old

When you are old and gray and full of sleep,
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;

How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And loved your beauty with love false or true;
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face.

And bending down beside the glowing bars
Murmur, a little sadly, how love fled
And paced upon the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

The Bells of Heaven

'Twould ring the bells of Heaven
The wildest peal for years,
If Parson lost his senses
And people came to theirs,
And he and they together
Knelt down with angry prayers
For tamed and shabby tigers,
And dancing dogs and bears,
And wretched, blind pit ponies,
And little hunted hares.

Farewell

When I lie where shades of darkness
Shall no more assail mine eyes,
Nor the rain make lamentation
  When the wind sighs;
How will fare the world whose wonder
Was the very proof of me?
Memory fades, must the remembered
  Perishing be?

Oh, when this my dust surrenders
Hand, foot, lip, to dust again,
May those loved and loving faces
  Please other men!
May the rusting harvest hedgerow
Still the Traveller's Joy entwine,
And as happy children gather
  Posies once mine.

Look thy last on all things lovely,
Every hour. Let no night
Seal thy sense in deathly slumber
  Till to delight
Thou have paid thy utmost blessing;
Since that all things thou would'st praise
Beauty took from those who loved them
  In other days.

The True Paradise

Lord, is the Poet to destruction vowed,
Like the dawn-feather of an April cloud,
Which signs in russet character or grey
The name of Beauty on the book of Day ?
We poets crave no heav'n but what is ours—
These trees beside these rivers ; these same flowers
Shaped and enfragranced to the English field
Where Thy best florist-craft is full revealed.
Trees by the river, birds upon the bough
My soul shall ask for, whose flesh enjoys them now
Through both the pale-blue windows of quick Mind ;
Grant me earth's treats in Paradise to find.
Nor listen to that island-bound St. John
Who'd have no Sea in Heaven, no Sea to sail upon !
Remake this World less Man's and Nature's Pain ;
Save such dear torment as the chill of Rain
When the sun flouts us like a maid her man
Drowned in long meshes of a silver Fan.
Nor, Lord, the good fatigue of labouring breath
Destroy, but only Sickness, Age and Death.
Let old Plays teach Despair's sad grandeur still
And legends trumpet War's last Hero-thrill.
So I and all my friend, still young, still wise,
Will shout along thy streets—" O Paradise ! "
But if prepared for me new Mansions are,
Chill and unknown, in some bright windy Star,
Mid strange-shaped Souls from all the Planets seven,
Lord, I fear deep, and would not go to Heaven.
Rather in feather-mist I'd fade away
Like the dawn-writing of an April day.

Acknowledgments

THE Editor's thanks are due to the following Publishers for permission to reprint most of the poems included in this anthology: Messrs. George Allen & Unwin (Edward Carpenter, *Towards Democracy ;* Godfrey Elton, *Schoolboys and Exiles ;* Ralph Hodgson, *The Last Blackbird*). Mr. Basil Blackwell (Clifford Bax, *A House of Words ;* L. A. G. Strong, *Dublin Days ;* Aldous Huxley, *The Burning Wheel ;* Edith Sitwell, *The Wooden Pegasus ;* Fredegond Shove, *Dreams and Journeys ;* A. S. Cripps, *A Pilgrimage of Grace*). Messrs. Burns, Oates & Washbourne, Ltd. (Shane Leslie, *Verses in Peace and War*). Mr. Jonathan Cape (Henry Bryan Binns, *Hilltops*). Messrs. Chatto & Windus (Robert Nichols, *Aurelia ;* Wilfred Owen, *Poems*). Messrs Christopher (Louis Golding, *Shepherd Singing Ragtime*). Messrs. W. Collins, Sons & Co., Ltd. (C. Kennett Burrow, *Poems*). Messrs. Constable & Co. Ltd. (Walter de la Mare, *The Veil*, *The Listeners*, *Peacock Pie ;* Gerald Crow, *The Island ;* H. D., *Sea Garden*). Messrs. J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd. (G. K. Chesterton, *The Wild Knight ;* Ernest Rhys, *The Leaf Burners*). Messrs. Duckworth & Co. (Hilaire Belloc, *Verses ;* D. H. Lawrence, *Love Poems and Others ;* T. Sturge Moore, *Theseus*, *Medea & Lyrics*). Messrs. W. Heffer & Sons, Ltd. (A. Young Campbell, *Poems*). Messrs. William Heinemann (Arthur Symons, *The Knave of Hearts*, *Poems ;* Isaac Rosenberg, *Poems ;* Siegfried Sassoon, *War Poems ;* Muriel Stuart, *Poems*). Messrs Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd. (J. C. Squire, *Poems: First Series*). Messrs. Herbert Jenkins, Ltd. (Francis Ledwidge, *Songs of the Fields*). Messrs. John Lane, The Bodley Head, Ltd. (A. C. Benson, *Collected Poems ;* Helen Parry Eden, *Coal and Candlelight ;* Lascelles Abercrombie, *Interludes and Poems ;* Margaret L.

Woods, *Collected Poems*). Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd. (Ralph Hodgson, *Poems ;* Thomas Hardy, *Collected Poems ;* Rudyard Kipling, *Songs from Books ;* James Stephens, *Songs from the Clay ;* A. E. (Mr. George Russell), *Collected Poems ;* Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, *Poetical Works ;* Norman Gale, *Collected Poems ;* W. B. Yeats, *Poems : Second Series*). Messrs. Maunsel & Roberts, Ltd. (Padraic Colum, *Wild Earth ;* James Stephens, *Insurrections*). Messrs. Elkin Mathews, Ltd. (F. S. Flint, *In the Net of the Stars ;* Wilfrid Gibson, *Friends ;* Laurence Binyon, *London Visions ;* Ezra Pound, *Umbra ;* John Masefield, *Ballads and Poems*). Messrs. Methuen & Co., Ltd. (Charles Dalmon, *A Poor Man's Riches*). Mr. John Murray for the four poems by Robert Bridges (W. M. Letts, *Songs from Leinster ;* Violet Jacob, *Songs of Angus*). Messrs. Martin Secker, Ltd. (James Elroy Flecker, *Collected Poems ;* Ford Madox Hueffer, *Collected Poems ;* Martin Armstrong, *The Buzzards ;* Edward Shanks, *The Queen of China*). Messrs. Selwyn & Blount, Ltd. (Eleanor Farjeon, *All the Way to Alfriston ;* Robin Flower, *Hymenaea ;* Edward Thomas, *Collected Poems ;* John Freeman, *Stone Trees ;* Douglas Goldring, *Streets*). Messrs. Sidgwick & Jackson (Rupert Brooke, *Poems ;* Edmund Blunden, *The Waggoner ;* John Drinkwater, *Tides ;* Rose Macaulay *The Two Blind Countries ;* John Masefield, *The Tragedy of Pompey the Great ;* Edgell Rickword, *Behind the Eyes ;* W. J. Turner, *The Dark Fire ;* Katharine Tynan). Messrs. Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co., Ltd. (R. L. Gales, *David in Heaven*). The Bloomsbury Press (Horace Shipp, *Hecuba in Camden Town*). The Country Life Press (V. H. Friedlander). The Egoist Press (Richard Aldington, *Images ;* James Joyce, *Chamber Music*). The Macmillan Co., New York (Padraic Colum). The Poetry Bookshop (John Alford, *Poems ;* Frances Cornford,

Spring Morning ; Charlotte Mew, *The Farmer's Bride ;* Harold Monro, *Strange Meetings ;* Mary Morison Webster, *To-Morrow ;* Anna Wickham, *The Contemplative Quarry*). Messrs. T. Fisher Unwin (Michael Field, *Wild Honey ;* W. B. Yeats, *Poems*).

Thanks are due also to most of the authors of the poems concerned.

Also to Lord Dunsany, literary executor of Francis Ledwidge ; Mr. Edward Marsh, literary executor of Rupert Brooke ; Mr. T. Sturge Moore, literary executor of Michael Field ; and Professor W. R. Sorley, literary executor for Charles Hamilton Sorley.

Also to *The Westminster Gazette* and *The New Witness.*

The Fairy Lough is included by permission of Moira O'Neill, and is taken from " Songs of the Glen of Antrim."

Index of Authors

ABERCROMBIE, Lascelles, 89
Aldington, Richard, 131
Alford, John, 23
Anderson, George, 135
Armstrong, Martin, 71

BAX, Clifford, 144
Beezley, J. D., 109
Belloc, Hilaire, 64, 95
Benson, A. C., 36
Binns, Henry Bryan, 153
Binyon, Laurence, 58
Blunden, Edmund, 169
Blunt, Wilfrid Scawen, 117, 165
Booth, Eva Gore, 60
Bottomley, Gordon, 63
Bridges, Robert, 17, 103, 129, 146
Brooke, Rupert, 46, 55, 177
Burrow, C. Kennett, 33

CAMPBELL, A. Young, 132
Campbell, Joseph, 114, 134
Carpenter, Edward, 72
Chesterton, G. K., 97
Church, Richard, 67
Colum, Padraic, 127, 178
Cornford, Frances, 39
Cripps, A. S., 162
Crow, Gerald, 70

D. H., 68, 69
Dalmon, Charles, 149
Davies, W. H., 128
De la Mare, Walter, 52, 66, 157, 186
Douglas, Alfred, 84, 115, 174
Drinkwater, John, 124

E. A., 118, 180
Eden, Helen Parry, 88
Ellis, V. Locke, 122
Elton, Godfrey, 137

FARJEON, Eleanor, 42
Field, Michael, 133, 161, 173
Flecker, J. E., 35, 83, 187
Flint, F. S., 152, 166
Flower, Robin, 110
Freeman, John, 73
Friedlander, V. H., 142

GALE, Norman, 151
Gales, R. L., 96
Gibson, Wilfrid, 78
Golding, Louis, 21, 86
Goldring, Douglas, 164
Graves, Robert, 100

HARDY, Thomas, 32, 77, 99, 176
Hodgson, Ralph, 27, 87, 116, 185
Hueffer, F. M., 119, 136
Huxley, Aldous, 38

JACOB, Violet, 80
Joyce, James, 98, 168
Johnson, M. M., 104

KIPLING, Rudyard, 57

LAWRENCE, D. H., 94, 141
Ledwidge, Francis, 31
Leslie, Shane, 56, 108
Letts, W. M., 41
Lysaght, S. R., 91

MACAULAY, Rose, 148
Masefield, John, 19, 143, 170, 182
Massingham, H. J., 53
Mew, Charlotte, 102, 154
Meynell, Alice, 92, 120,172
Monro, Harold, 179
Moore, T. Sturge, 25, 45, 121, 183
Moult, Thomas, 145
Munro, Neil, 113

NEWBOLT, Henry, 54
Nichols, Robert, 82
Nichols, Wallace B., 171
Noyes, Alfred, 93, 155

O'NEILL, Moira, 28
O'Sullivan, Seumas, 159
Owen, Wilfred, 79

PALMER, Herbert E., 30
Pepler, Douglas, 18
Plarr, Victor, 26
Plowman, Max, 49
Pound, Ezra, 34, 76, 126

RHYS, Ernest, 75, 140
Rickword, Edgell, 158
Rosenberg, Isaac, 160

SASSOON, Siegfried, 10
147
Seymour, William Kean, 12
Shanks, Edward, 81
Shipp, Horace, 101
Shove, Fredegond, 59, 167
Sitwell, Edith, 40
Sitwell, Sacheverell, 163
Sorley, C. Hamilton, 4
138, 181
Squire, J. C., 65
Stephens, James, 50, 74
Strong, L. A. G., 61, 139
Stuart, Muriel, 90
Symons, Arthur, 29, 105

THOMAS, Edward, 8
125, 150
Trench, Herbert, 22, 6
156
Turner, W. J., 43
Tynan, Katharine, 112

UNDERHILL, Evelyn,

WEBSTER, M. M., 44
Wickham, Anna, 24, 111
Wolfe, Humbert, 47, 106
Woods, M. L., 130

YEATS, W. B., 20, 37, 17
184